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ABSTRACT

An action research project studied the attitudes and achievement of low-achieving fifth-grade students after participating in a 1-year heterogeneously grouped, literature-based reading program. The project explored the changes in student attitudes towards reading, and changes in students' knowledge in comprehension and vocabulary development. Eight fifth-graders from a Christian school in Michigan were evaluated through a pre and post student achievement test; a pre and post student attitude questionnaire, student comments, parental comments and diary, and a pre and post Houghton Mifflin basal grade equivalent skills test required by the principal of the school. Results indicated that the attitudes of low achievers towards reading were more positive after the treatment. The low achievers were more motivated to read, and the reading achievement scores indicated a gain in both vocabulary and comprehension. Results suggest that the attitudes and achievement of the low achievers can increase while participating in a heterogeneously grouped literature-based reading program with instruction that directly instructs them to monitor their own metacognition. Low achievers can benefit from exposure to children's literature to motivate them to read. Through direct instruction of comprehensive strategies, low achievers can learn to monitor their own comprehension. While participating in heterogeneous groups, differences are minimized. (Author/PRA)

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THE RESPONSE OF FIFTH GRADE LOW ACHIEVERS TO LITERATURE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION THROUGH WHOLE CLASS AND HETEROGENEOUS ARRANGEMENTS

By

June DeBoer

A project sumitted in fulfillment
of the requirements in
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this action research project was to study the attitudes and achievement of low-achieving fifth grade students after participating in a one-year heterogeneously grouped, literature-based reading program. This project explored the changes in student attitudes towards reading and changes in students' knowledge in comprehension and vocabulary development.

The five methods of collecting data for this research project were: a pre and post student achievement test, a pre and post student attitude questionnaire, student comments, parental comments and diary, and a pre and post Houghton Mifflin basal grade equivalent skills test required by my principal.

After the treatment, the attitudes towards reading of the low achievers were more positive. The low achievers were more motivated to read, and read more. The reading achievement scores indicated a gain in both vocabulary and comprehension.

Based on the results from this research, the attitudes and the achievement of the low achiever can increase while participating in a heterogeneously grouped literature -based reading program with instruction that directly instructs them to monitor their own metacognition.

Low achievers can benefit from exposure to children's literature to motivate them to read. Through direct instruction of comprehension strategies, low achievers can

learn to monitor their own comprehension. While participating in heterogeneous groups, differences are minimized.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem 7
Importance of the Problem 8
Research Questions 10
Methods of Gathering Data 11
Limitations of the Study 13

LITERATURE REVIEW

Low Achievers 14
Low Achievers and Attitudes towards Reading 14
Low Achievers and Reading Achievement 17
Low Achievers and Reading Comprehension 19

Teaching of Reading Through the Use of Children's Literature Instead of the Basal 23

Heterogeneous Cooperative Groupings vs. Homogeneous Competitive Groupings 28
Whole Group vs. Small Groups 34

Direct Instruction 36

Interacting Strategies
- Contextual Redefinition 37
- Teacher Think A-Louds 38
- Directed Reading Thinking Approach 39
- Direct Explanation 40
- Reciprocal Teaching 42

Organizational Strategies
- KWL 44
- Semantic Mapping 44
- Story Map 45

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES
- Subjects 46
- Description of Treatment 47

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

When reading instruction using children's literature is implemented using whole class and heterogeneous small groups:

Research Question 1: What changes occur in the reading attitudes of the low-achieving student? 53

Research Question 2: What changes occur in the reading achievement of the low-achieving student? 65

Research Question 3: Do low-achieving students read more books? 76

Research Question 4: What other teacher perceived problems and benefits will occur, and what are the reflective insights of the teacher? 76

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions 84
Recommendations 86
Impact on Personal and Professional Development 89

APPENDICES

A. Student Attitude Survey 91
B. Tallied Responses of September 1988 92
C. Tallied Responses of May 1989 93
D. Reading Habits Survey 94
E. Student Reading Checklist 95
F. Reading Treatment Evaluation 96
G. Children's Literature Books Used 97
H. RAX Reading Incentive 99
I. Reading Definition 100
J. Children's Literature Genre Chart 101
K. Reading Log Chart 102
L. Five Finger Method for Appropriate Level 103
M. New Words Chart 104
N. Vocabulary Example 105
O. Think A-Loud 106
P. DRTA Fiction 107
Q. DRTA Expository 108
R. Reciprocal Teaching 109
S. KWLs 110
T. KWL chart 111
U. Semantic Mapping 112
V. Expository Text Mapping 113
W. Character Wheel Map 114
X. Tuck Everlasting, Babbitt (sample map) 115
Y. Sign of the Beaver, Speare (sample map) 116
Z. Story Map 117

AA. Story Map Example 1 118
BB. Story Map Example 2 119
CC. Story Map Example 3 120
DD. Relationship Map 121
EE. Story Grammar 122
FF. Theme Map 123
GG. Themes 124
HH. Character Chart 125
II. Report Card 126
JJ. Signal Words List 127
KK. Guidelines for Asking Questions 128

REFERENCES 129

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

As an educator, I am concerned about the children in my class who have difficulty reading and comprehending what they read. It bothers me that they are not motivated to read, do not enjoy reading, or develop their comprehension. It also concerns me that many of these low-achieving students have a sense of failure even before they begin.

Another concern for me is the whole question of grouping. In the area of reading, students have traditionally been grouped according to their prior performance. Those with lower abilities tend to be reading below grade level, and do not seem to make much progress. Instruction is very skill-oriented, with little time spent actually reading or teaching comprehension strategies to monitor their own comprehension. As a result, their attitudes towards reading are poor, and they are unmotivated to do well remaining passive in the reading process. As a result, they remain in the same grouping several grades later still struggling and unmotivated to do well.

I have become more and more convinced that there is a need for effective instruction for the low achievers. This can be done through the use of children's literature which

can motivate low-achievers, rather than the basals they negatively associate with. Exposure to children's literature can captivate their interests and develop their background knowledge. It would encourage them to read and thus, expand their vocabulary and develop their comprehension.

Low achievers would benefit in a heterogeneous setting where children work cooperatively rather than in traditional homogeneous settings which emphasize competition. Working together would actively involve the low achiever to participate amd receive support from his or her peers. This would boost the self-confidence of the low achiever.

Importance of the Problem

From my experience as an intermediate level elementary teacher, I have found that placing students in low-ability reading groups has resulted in a lack of interest in reading not only because they cannot compete, but also because the simplified materials lack high interest level. The poor students do not like to read, and often will not choose to do so either.

Arlene Anang reports that:

> "Poor readers say that reading consists of fluent and rapid reading aloud, doing pages in a workbook or saying works with correct pronunciation. Good readers report that

reading is knowing what a story is about and is a way of gaining further information"

(Anang, 1982, p.6)

In working with students in the low ability group, I have also found that they realize that they are not progressing as well as their classmates. They experience failure repeatedly and thus, have a lower self-esteem. Sometimes they feel they can do nothing right.

I have also found that the students in the low ability group do not read because they associate "reading" with the basal and workbook. They dislike "reading" and so by choice do little of it.

Furthermore, I have found a tendency for the low achievers to remain below grade level. Low groups tend to remain constant - once in the low group, always in the low group. They receive different quantitative and qualitative instruction, and as a result have to work extremely hard to change groups.

Therefore, implementation of a new reading program seems vital to helping these children become readers in today's society. For:

"If we teach a child to rea, yet develop not the tast for reading, all of our teaching is for naught. We shall have produced a nation of 'illiterate literates'- those who know how to but do not.

Charlotte Huck

(Lehr, 1982, p.80)

Research Questions

This project attempted to answer the following questions:

When reading instruction using children's literature is implemented using whole class and heterogeneous small groups:

1. What changes occur in the reading attitudes of the low-achieving student?

2. What changes occur in the reading achievement of the low-achieving student?

3. Do lower-achieving students read more books?

4. What other teacher perceived problems and benefits will occur, and what are the reflective insights of the teacher?

METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

1. To discover the children's attitudes about reading each student was given a reading attitude survey, a reading habits questionnaire, and a reading checklist during the second week of school. I first discussed the importance of being honest about what they thought and felt about reading. During the last week of May, they took the reading attitude survey, the reading habits questionnaire, and reading checklist again to receive post-treatment results. I also gave them a reading treatment evaluation to obtain their post-treatment written responses. I again reviewed the need for the students to be honest about what they thought and felt. I reminded them that these were the same ones that they took at the beginning of the school year. Parts of the attitude survey and reading checklist were piloted in a classroom at Seymour Christian School in Grand Rapids. (See Appendix A)

2. Since reading achievement is a very important variable in this study, the Gates- MacGinitie Reading Test was given to assess the overall reading growth of each student during the school year. The test was given on September 20, prior to the treatment and again on May 2 to obtain the post-treatment scores. This test was used because it had been given in other

Christian schools and was recommended by the reading consultants I interviewed. To determine that the skills from the series were taught as recommended by my principal, a record of the skills and what literature book or content curriculum they were implemented in was kept. Pre and post tests from the Houghton Mifflin reading series were administered to measure the children's progress in larning reading skills.

3. To determine if the below grade level achieving student read more books, I had students keep track of the books they read in a reading log which they used to get RAX coupons for free meals. I had parents as well as myself check the reading log weekly to monitor and tally the number of books that were read.

4. To monitor the responses to reading of the low-achieving student at school, parents' commments that I heard directly were noted. Parents were given logs to write down comments that were said by their child at home. My reflective thoughts about the progress of the program were noted in the files of the novels as I taught them.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to one full school year. It was limited to fifth grade low-achievers in a suburban, white, middle-class school district. It was limited to one class with no control group.

The second limitation was that of measuring student attitudes towards reading. This was subjective, and one hopes that they have responded honestly. Correlating the results of the attitude surveys and the observational data, the results would seem to be valid.

Another limitation that I encountered was that there was only one year for me to observe any long-range changes in attitude regarding reading.

SECTION 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

LOW ACHIEVERS

Low achievers are often referred to as disabled readers or poor readers (Allington, 1977; Anderson et al., 1985). Anderson (1985) refers to low achievers as the children in school who are sometimes listless, inattentive, and sometimes disruptive. They do not complete work and become anxious when faced with a task that is too difficult for them (p.15). Witty (1968) summarizes this by saying that these are the children who experience disappointments and frustrations in school because they fail to comprehend materials fully and to make steady progress in learning" (Howes & Darrow, 1968, p. 112). They lack motivation, are passive and as a result do not play an active role in the learning process (Anderson, 1985; Bristow, 1985)

LOW ACHIEVERS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS READING

Low achievers, those who have difficulty reading, tend to have negative attitudes towards reading that are often based on their previous negative encounters with reading. These negative encounters may include poor reading materials (Allington, 1983; Anderson et al. 1985; Cullinan, 1987; Goodman, 1986), skill oriented instruction (Allington. 1983; Anderson et al., 1985; Bristow, 1985; Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986; Pearson, 1985), as well as ability

grouping for reading instruction (Allington 1983; Anderson et al., 1985; Bristow, 1985; Burchby, 1988; Covington, 1984; Goodlad, 1984; Heibert, 1983), all of which affect their attitudes towards reading.

For many low achievers, reading is not fun; it is laborious. Much of their time is spent reading orally which takes longer and is frustrating (Allington, 1983). They read materials that are at their frustration level as opposed to high achievers who read materials at their instructional level (Allington, 1983; Borko and Eisenhart; 1986; Bristow, 1985; Gambrell, Wilson and Gantt, 1981). They associate reading with drills and worksheets (Allington, 1983; Anderson et al., 1985; Borko and Eisenhart, 1986; Covington, 1984). Most of the reading materials are boring, sometimes below their age level interests (Allington, 1983; Anderson.et al., 1985; Bristow. 1985, Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986). As a result, low ability students are less interested in reading, are less motivated to read, and in effect, read less.

For most low achievers, reading brings with it a sense of failure. Failure is not fun. As a result, of failure poor readers have unfavorable attitudes towards reading. Low achievers tend to experience failure in the reading process when comprehension breaks down. Since most classroom reading instruction is organized into traditonal ability groups, many worry about the impact of membership of low achievers in the low group with respect to the vision

of themselves as readers. "Despite efforts, some kids come to reading with 'FAILURE' written all over their faces" (Henke, 1988, p. 43). This sense of failure leads to lower self-esteem and consequently a lower self-concept. Weinstein (1976) found assignment to a low ability group negatively affected a student's self-concept. Borg (1966) found that low-abilty students had lower self-concepts in ability-grouped schools than in non-grouped schools.

Some researchers note that there is a direct relationship between the sense of failure and a sense of helplessness (Anderson et al., 1985). Bristow (1985) feels that this helplessness could be referred to as "learned helplessness" (p. 320). She notes that Butkowsky and Willows (1980) documented that in situations requiring reading, poor readers showed lower expectations of success and greater decreases in their estimates of success following failure. Their confidence was more easily shakened, and their ability to cope with failure appeared less efficient. They gave up more quickly. In a difficult situation, good and average readers persisted 40% longer that poor readers. Poor readers were also less likely to see themselves as the source of their success.

Researchers suggest that in order for students to feel success one needs to develop the self-concept of low achievers. Conditions for improving self-concepts include establishing a positive classroom atmosphere, making students feel accepted, and providing students with success.

Quantd and and Selznick (1984) suggest minimizing the differences between reading abilities. Evidence has been gathered to establish the fact that while reading differences cannot be completely disguised from children minimizing differences can enhance achievement and attitudes.

Anderson (1985) notes "what is not predictable is whether lack of proficiency in reading stems from unfavorable attitudes or whether it is the other way around. Probably the truth can lie in either direction" (p. 15).

LOW ACHIEVERS AND READING ACHIEVEMENT

When asked the question, "What is reading?", researchers found that there were dramatic differences in the answers given by low achievers and high achievers. Researchers found that low achievers regard reading as a decoding process, focusing on word-calling (Allington, 1983; Anderson, 1985; Anderson, Mason, and Shirey, 1983; Borko and Eisenhart, 1986). To low achievers, reading is filling out worksheets and doing more drill work and skill practice to improve their reading.

Allington (1983), in his study reports that Leinhardt et al. (1981) found tht time spent on "indirect reading" activities adds little to improving achievement (p. 556). Poor readers "read as if they do not expect what they read to make sense as if getting every individual word right were the key" (Smith, 1978, p.34). If readers consider

word-calling to be the major goal of reading, they are unlikely to notice inconsistencies in text. They are also less likely to use strategies in comprehension because comprehension is not the goal. As a result, they become frustrated with reading and fail to succeed. They do not enjoy reading nor see the value of it as a means for understanding and gaining meaning. Roney (1984) states that if children do not see reading as both enjoyable and immediately useful, they "will regard it unfavorably and fail to develop the habit" (p.197). As a result, they lack motivation to read and do not read (Allington, 1983, Anderson et al., 1985, Winograd and Smith, 1987). Since the time spent reading directly affects reading achievement, the reading achievement of low achievers is below grade level.

There is increasing agreement that one learns to read by reading (Allington, 1983; Anderson et al., 1985; Eldridge, 1985). "Time spent reading books was the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade " (Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding, 1988, p. 297). Research has shown that low ability students spend considerably less time (33%) reading, than do good readers (57%) (Gambrell, Wilson, and Gantt, 1981).

In addition to this, they found that students spent less time actively engaged in on-task behaviors and reading comprehension activities Allington, 1983). More disabled learners not only spend more time on meaningless drills in isolation, but have difficulty making the transfer to the

actual art of reading. Since time spent reading directly affects reading achievement, reseachers recommend giving low achievers more time to actually read books. This also includes silent reading which is used more commonly by good readers. Allington (1983) found in his study that poor readers read 70% of the time orally, while high achievers spent 30% of their time reading orally. He goes on to say that several studies have provided evidence that emphasizing comprehension and silent reading produces achievement gains (p. 554). The more low ability students read and spends time reading, the more proficient they will become (Anderson, 1985; Eldridge, 1985; Pearson; 1984), for "mere practice will go far to increase a child's growth in understanding and literacy" (Johnston, p. 43)

LOW ACHIEVERS AND READING COMPREHENSION

Since low achievers view reading as a decoding process focusing on word-calling, they do not focus on reading as a comprehension process. Thy do not actively monitor their ongoing comprehension. Bristow (1985) reports Garner and Kraus (1980) found that poor readers when asked what they did when they didn't understand something, they skipped it, while good readers used fix up strategies to monitor their own comprehension (p. 318). They appear willing to accept passively whatever the author presents even while not comprehending what they read. "They read as if they do not

expect what they read to make sense, as if getting every individual word right were the key" (Smith, 1978, p.34).

Researchers found that poor readers do not regularly and actively use comprehension enhancing strategies generally used by good and average readers. These include:

1. setting a purpose for what is to be read
2. activating prior knowledge
3. focusing on main ideas
4. evaluating materials in the light of what they already know
5. monitoring their own comprehenion performance through predictions and comfirmations

(Allington, 1983; Bristow, 1985; Palincsar and Brown, 1983; Pearson, 1984)

If reading is comprehending, "then we should never give a student any reason to believe it is anything else" (Pearson, 1984, p.15). Recent studies have proven that when reading is taught as a process of constructing meaning from the text, rather than decoding words which most low achievers are involved in, most students do become capable readers. Actively involving low-achievers in the comprehension process not only improves comprehension, but also achievement and attitudes towards learning (Bristow, 1985; Duffy and Roehler, 1987; Pearson, 1985)..

In order to build comprehension and actively involve readers in the comprehesion process, researchers recommend that instuction for low achievers focus on comprehending-

making sense of what is read and gaining meaning. In other words, poor readers must be encouraged to monitor their own comprehension by asking, "Does this make sense?" (Allington, 1983; Anderson et al., 1985; Bristow, 1985; Borko and Eisenhart, 1986). Some researchers caution that it may take some time to do this because "unfortunately children who don't notice that they don't understand, probably haven't truly understood for a long time and may have abandoned the idea that reading shoud make some sense" (Bristow, 1985, p. 322).

In order to build comprehension, researchers suggest developing a child's background of experience related to story content as well as to literacy in general. This background experience includes not only general background knowledge, but also concepts of print, language, story structure, and reading's usefulness (Roney, 1984). A key suggestion for improving this background of experiences is reading a variety of literature aloud to children, which Roney suggests is the only technique that has potential for developing all types of experiences at once. (p. 199). Other researchers suggest that background experience of poor achievers is enhanced with the use of pre-reading activities including questions and discussions prior to reading to activate their schemata and increase recall (Hansen and Hubbard, 1984, Palincsar and Ransom, 1988), as well as during and after so that students integrate their new knowledge with the old (Bristow, 1985; Pearson, 1985).

Reseach has shown that low achievers do not possess comprehension strategies that enhance comprehension, and thus, enable them to control their own metacognition. Research has shown that low achievers need explicit instruction in the importance of assuming an active role in comprehension monitoring, as well as taking corrective action when their comprehension fails (Anderson, Mason, and Shirey, 1983; Palincsar and Brown, 1983). Low achievers do not do this automatically and can be taught to do this through strategies such as "think a-louds" (Davey, 1983; Fitzgerald, 1983), Directed Reading Thinking Approach (Stauffer, 1969), Direct Explanation (Duffy and Rohler, 1988) and Reciprocal Teaching (Palincsar,1987).

Allington (1983) suggests that the more closely we approximate the instructional environment to that of good readers, the better our poor readers will become (p. 356). This can be done by providing lots of opportunities to read, both orally and silently, and a variety of interesting materials that allow the low achiever to experience that reading as enjoyable and useful. It also means actively involving readers in meaningful comprehension activities where they actively monitor their own comprehension and gain control over the reading process. When they do this, they will see that reading is active, pleasurable, and motivational. They will enjoy reading, read more, and through practice, will increase their reading achievement and reading comprehension.

TEACHING OF READING THROUGH USE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE INSTEAD OF THE BASAL

Many researchers believe that a primary goal of teaching reading is to turn our students into life-long readers (Anderson, 1985; Cullinan, 1987; Johnson, 1978). In order to do this and well as teach comprehension and metacognition, some feel that this is done effectively through the use of children's literature (Cullinan, 1987; Fenwick, 1978/79; Hurst, 1980; Norton, 1983; Sloan, 1980; Smith, 1975; Vacca and Vacca, 1987, Veatch, 1984). Even so, studies involving the use of children's literature with low-achievers as an alternative to the basal are yet rare, especially with populations of low acievers taught in whole class and heterogeneous arrangements (Eldridge and Butterfield, 1986; and Shumaker and Shumaker, 1988).

Kenneth Goodman, in his report on Basals (1986) feels that traditional basals do not teach children effective reading instruction or to enjoy reading. The basals place great emphasis on isolated skills, the stories are dull and revised with controlled vocabulary, and they introduce arbitrary sequences of skills which do not involve comprehension. They discourage risk taking by requiring right answers to trivial details thus, encouraging students to be passive learners.

Recent reports and polls suggest that a heavy emphasis on phonics and decoding skills found in basal readers and their workbooks do not relate to the stories

read. The stories do little to interest the reader and the vocabulary is controlled (Anderson et all, 1985; Goodman, 1986; Sorenson, 1985; Vacca and Vacca 1987). Burchby goes on to say that in basal reading instruction, "the words have power over the students, thus robbing them of the ownership of what they read and think" (1988, p. 118). This, she concludes, undermines the process of making meaning - what reading is all about. Others state that this may account for some of the passiveness on the part of the reader (Durkin, 1983; Hurst, 1980; Watson and Davis, 1988).

In a study asking students what they thought the purpose of a basal was, Cairney (1988), found that students did not see meaning as important when reading basals. They did not find them interesting. They negatively associated reading as a basal activity and a school subject. The findings also supported that many children place great emphasis on decoding, vocabulary, and accuracy, rather than on gaining meaning from the text and experiencing the affect of reading. Bloome (1985) goes on to say that if students participate in the same low level class year after year, they could develop a set way of seeing and doing reading that way.

Basal programs are also designed so that the tests place children into ability groups (Burchby, 1988; Goodman, 1987). Low-ability students who are already less successful, spend less time reading meaningful language and

more time on drill and additional practice materials. (Allington, 1983; Anderson, 1985; Goodman, 1987).

More and more authorities today believe that children's literature can be used as an alternative to increase literacy (Durkin, 1979; Higgins, 1986; Sloan, 1980). It can be used to build background experiences (Roney, 1984) and teach reading comprehension and metacognition (Burns, 1980; Chanian, 1985; Dwyer, 1976; Goodman, 1986; Johnson and Louis, 1987; Sloan, 1980). "Literature is the genuine reading material as is found in trade books and periodicals. It is poems, plays, stories created for their own sake by world artists, or informational pieces with style and invention," (Sloan, 1980, p. 68). "It opens the doors of discovery and adventure for children." (Norton, 1983, p. 30).

Reading children's literature is cited as beneficial for many reasons (Cullinan, 1987; Goodman, 1986; Jenkins, 1968; Johnson, 1978/79; Lukens, 1986; Norton, 1983; and Smith, 1975). Some of these include:

1. Reading children's literature is fun. It's variety attracts reluctant readers and motivates them to read more and enjoy reading. Studies have shown that children get "hooked" on reading books and read more (Anderson et al., 1985; Eldridge and Butterfield, 1986; Morton, 1983; Shumaker and Shumaker, 1988; Sutherland and Arbuthnot, 1977).

2. Reading comprehension is improved through more time spent reading (Allington, 1980; Burchby, 1988; Cohen, 1985, Cullinan, 1987; Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986).

3. Children's literature provides the catalyst for actively monitoring one's metacognition. It promotes predicting and confirming. It encourages critical thinking and cognitive development. (Goodman, 1986; Huck, 1982, Vacca and Vacca, 1987).

4. Children's books expand one's knowledge of one's self, our neighbors, the world, and our cultural heritage.

5. Children's books stimulate and develop cognitive development.

6. Children's literature provides strong, well-crafted language models and encourages language development.

7. Children's books contain vocabulary in a contextual setting enabling children to comprehend better.

8. Children's books nurture and expand one's imagination.

9. Children's literature offers an avenue for integrating comprehension strategies actively engaging the reader in meaningful comprehension.

10. Reading children's literature can create new experiences and enrich old ones (Huck, 1982). It provides a link to what one already knows and learns based on what is read (Palincsar and Brown, 1983).

Although few studies have been done researching the use of children's literature with low ability students, there is increasing need among researchers to insure that low-achieving students actively participate in the reading process. Given the above reasons for incorporating children's literature in the classroom, Edredge and Butterfield (1986) found that exposing low achievers to children's literature motivated low-ability students who are reluctant to read. In turn, they read more and became better readers with more positive attitudes towards school. Since studies suggest that the amount of time children spend reading in school is associated with the gains in reading achievement, children's literature may be a beneficial criterion for this (Allington, 1984; Leinhardt, Hizmond and Cooley, 1981).

Teaching reading through children's literature does not require low achievers to be homogeneously ability-grouped (Goodman, 1986). Groups can instead be formed on the choice of the literature read. Low achievers can actively read along and interact with other students in reading literature in large and small heterogeneous groups (Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986). In this way, there are fewer opportunities for low achievers to compare themselves with their high achieving classmates and greater opportunities to read and experience success (Goodman, 1986; Rumelhart, 1985).

HETEROGENEOUS COOPERATIVE GROUPINGS VS HOMOGENEOUS COMPETITIVE GROUPINGS

Past research on ability grouping indicates that it still my be "the most unresolved issue," (George, 1988, p.22). Research findings in the past, according to Kulik and Kulik (1984), conclude that nothing has been established with certainty about ability-grouping. Ability grouping "implies creative instructional groups which are as homogeneous as possible. Using this instructional organization, students are grouped according to their simialar learning needs" (Slavin, 1987, p.31). While this was originally designed to promote academic achievement of all ability levels, Oakes (1985), reported that studies done on homogeneous groups failed to indicate that students benefited academically from the practice of ability grouping for instruction. Traditionally reading instruction has been done with ability grouping. Many have argued that this is the only way to manage the vast differences found in a classroom. While advocates of homogeneous groupings cite benefits in reading achievement (Otto, Rude, and Spiegel, 1979), research by Hiebert (1983) indicates otherwise. In his own research and reviews of research, Slavin (1987), concluded that there are few if any student academic achievement benefits in elementary schools.

While ability grouping was first used as attempt to meet the individual needs of students, research has yet to

find significant evidence of its benefits to low-achieving students. Studies done by Ogletree and Bennett (1972) and Ogletree (1973) reported that there were no significant differences in reading achievement. In a research review by Hiebert (1983), few studies did exist that suggest homogeneous groupings were effective in raising the reading achievement levels (Unsworth, 1984). Thus, while ability grouping may have had positive effects on high achievers, it may be detrimental for low achievers. More recent studies conclude that ability grouping may indeed have a stigmatizing effect on low achievers (Goodlad 1984; Oakes 1985; Slavin 1987).

Research based on observations and studies done with ability grouping found a significant difference in the quality and quantity of reading instruction, expectations, motivation, time-on-task, and performance between low and high achievers.

1. Low achievers in low ability groups spent most of their time on decoding tasks, isolated skills and reading words from lists while high achievers spent most of their time on contextual reading and meaning related activities (Alpert, 1975; Anderson et all, 1985, Gambrell, Wilson, and Gantt, 1981; Heibert, 1983).

2. Low achievers spend less time reading. In a study done by Anderson (1985), the number of words read by low-achieving fifth graders was 4,400 as compared to 6,900 by high achievers A group of studies found that low

achievers read less both orally and silently, sometimes two to three times less than high achievers (Allington, 1977, 1980, 1984).

3. Low achievers spend more time reading orally, while high achievers spend more time reading silently. Oral reading tends to be more repetitive, and few uses of new materials are included (Anderson, 1985; Goodlad, 1984; Grant and Rothenberg, 1986; Hiebert, 1983; Oakes, 1985).

4. While reading orally, low achievers are interrupted sometimes two to five times more by teachers than are high achievers who make similar errors. Teachers tend to give the low achievers graphophonic cues, rather than syntaxic and semantic cues as given to better readers (Allington, 1977, 1980; Anderson,1985; Goodlad, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; Oakes, 1985).

5. Low achievers have fewer opportunites to answer analytical type questions as well as time to respond. Questions were more factual and few required any reasoning (Allington, 1982; Anderson, 1985; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985).

6. Low achievers in low ability groups are less frequently engaged in the assigned tasks than those in high ability groups. Children in low ability groups tend to distract one another, are sometimes perceived to be troublemakers, and do not always pay attention. More time is spent on behavior management than on reading instruction (Anderson, 1985; Eder, 1982; Gambrell, Wilson, and Gantt,

1981; Good and Beckerman, 1978, Rosenshine and Berliner, 1978. Since time spent on behavior management is negatively correlated with learning (Brophy, 1979), low ability groups have less opportunities for reading instruction.

7. Low achievers tend to remain in the low ability group with little or no movement to another group, or catch-up to make such a move (Anderson, 1985; Grandt and Rothenberg, 1986; Hiebert, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985 and Weinstein, 1976). Allington (1983) found that in order for low achievers to move between groups, they not only needed to work harder and learn more, but also had to learn qualitatively different things. This was rarely done, and so, as Eldredge and Butterfield (1986), observed, "children placed in low groups in first grade were usually in the low groups in sixth grade" (p. 32).

Probably the most detrimental aspect of homogeneous ability grouping for low achievers is the negative effects it has on a child's self-concept. "Low achievers are aware of their position, and therefore think of themselves as"low-ability", this may result in lower self-concept and decreased motivation" (Filby and Barnett, 1982, p. 445). Rosenbaum (1980) concluded in his study that low ability students in low ability groups were some of the ones who gave lower self evaluations. Children in low ability groups tend to express more negative feelings about reading, themselves, and members of their group (Anderson, 1985, Elder, 1982; Goodlad, 1984; Hiebert, 1983; and Oakes, 1985).

While research results in this area are not conclusive, the tendancy is to conclude that ability grouping has had negative effects on the self concepts of low achievers.

Although research concerning the effects of heterogeneous groupings on low achievers is minimal, Eldredge and Butterfield (1986), in their study of alternatives to reading instruction, offer support for the notion that children can learn in hetereogeneous groups. Furthermore, Johnson, Johnson, Holubec and Roy have discovered in their research that "cooperative learning experiences, compared with competitive and individualistic ones, promote more positve attitudes towards both the subject area and the instructional experience, as well as more continuing motivation to learn more about the subject area being studied" (1984, p. 17).

Cooperative learning requires that groups are small and are composed of 3-6 students of differing ability, grouped together in a non-competitive way working together towards common goals (Jonnson et al., 1984). In cooperative groups, through interaction with others, students acquire and interpret knowledge and assume responsibility for their learning. They found that low ability students can benefit from opportunities to work cooperatively in herterogeneous groups of mixed abilities (Johnson et al., 1984; Pearson, 1981). Cooperative groups created a more cooperative rather than competitive atmosphere where

students were able to interact with each other (Filby and Barnett, 1987) incorportating the social aspect of reading.

When given the opportunity to work in cooperative groups, low achievers learned more (Anderson et al., 1985) and felt they belonged to a variety of groups of various abilities and interests, as well as were free of the ego-deflating stigma which often accompanies the placement in the "slow" group (Allington, 1977; Duffy and Roehler, 1986; Oakes, 1985; Slavin, 1987). As low achievers developed positive feelings about learning and working together, their attitudes improved. It promotes active learning, motivation, positive self-esteem, and commeradery (Johnson et al., 1984).

Hawley and Rosenholtz (1987), found that when low achievers work more cooperatively with middle and high achievers, there were achievement benefits for all. In a study done with fourth, fifth, and sixth graders by Peterson and Janicki (1979), low achieving students did much better after learning in mixed ability groups. Research has shown that low achievers not only had higher achievements, but they also had more positive attitudes towards reading and school when interacting with high achievers (Anderson, 1985; Duffy and Roehler, 1986).

With respect to self-esteem, Filby and Barnett (1982) found that students in heterogeneous groups were better able to maintain a positive self concept. Children did not have to suffer the humiliation of being in a "slow group"

(Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986). They develop positive feelings about learning from each other and develop good feelings about themselves. They begin to realize that they can achieve and feel good about it (Anderson, 1985; Pearson, 1985). Even so, there is a need for further research concerning the effects of heterogeneous grouping on low achievers.

WHOLE GROUP VS SMALL GROUPS

Not much research could be found by the researcher comparing the large group teaching to small group teaching. According to Hiebert, "none of the studies today have produced information on the direct relationship between group size and learning outcomes" (1983, p. 235).

In the reviews, several studies indicate that the amount of time a teacher spends in teacher-directed reading relates to reading achievement. Hiebert (1983), reports that in a study done by Peterson and Janicki in 1979, low-achievers did better and had more positive attitudes towards learning in large group, teacher-directed settings. Low achievers need the greater direction and help provided by teachers in whole group instruction as opposed working alone or in small groups without the teacher. Low achieving students need close supervision not only to stay on task because they tend to distract one another, but they also benefit from immediate teacher interaction when the

strategies they are using break down and cause difficulty in their reading (Anderson, 1985; Pearson, 1985).

Whole class instruction in comprehension strategies is feasible (Anderson et al. 1985). In whole class reading, a learning community can be built on shared experiences. As children read and react to what they read, they broaden their personal perspectives and become aware of other points of view (Henke, 1988). Immediate interaction with the whole class enables teachers to teach comprehension strategies to low achievers, actively involving them to monitor their own comprehension. This can be done through Contextual Redefinition (Maring and Furman, 1984), Teacher Think a-Louds, (Davey, 1983), Direct Explanation (Duffy et al., 1987), which incorporate what we know as the Directed Reading Thinking Approach (Stauffer, 1969), and Reciprocal Teaching (Palincsar, 1987) to activate the metacognition of low achievers. While calling for the use of more whole class instruction, Anderson is careful to note although whole class instruction achieves good results and is feasible in some areas, including comprehension, more research needs to be done (1985, p. 91).

Along with whole class and small cooperative groups, made up of heterogeneously grouped students, there is the need for the low ability student to independently practice and apply the strategies learned to effectively monitor his or her own comprehension. This can be done in carefully monitored, independent reading (Allington, 1977; Anderson et

al., 1985) and Sustained, Quiet, UnInterrupted, Reading Time (Kobrin, 1988). In this way, low achievers will spend more time reading books, exposing them to a greater knowledge base and practice strategies which enable them to gain meaning from what they read.

In the end, several researchers recommend the use of various forms of grouping. Research on effective learning shows that students benefit from all types of experiences: guidance from teachers in large or small group settings, student-teacher interactive settings, and application in independent settings (Brophy and Good, 1986). Careful attention specifically to the compositon of groups, the nature of the group tasks, and the management capabilites as noted by a review of changes in grouping for optimum learning by Usworth will benefit the low achiever (1984, p. 300).

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

Direct instruction or active teacher-centered instruction is a strategy that actively involves the student in the learning process. Its use can develop comprehension, activate involvement, and improve attitudes. Based on Anderson's et al. discussion of direct instruction in Becoming A Nation of Readers (1985), Gaskins summarizes it as, " explaining to students what they will be doing, why they will be doing it , how to do it, and when they can apply it," (Gaskins, 1988, p. 753).

Active comprehension instruction is more likely to occur when instruction is direct (Durkin, 1979; Nolte and Singer, 1985). When modeled effectively and repetitively, low achievers are able to understand the process of comprehension, monitor their comprehension, and ideally internalize them and use them.

INTERACTING STRATEGIES

CONTEXTUAL REDEFINITION

Maring and Furman (1984) found that whole-group class strategy of contextual redefinition benefited all students in the classroom, particularly those who were low achievers. This strategy benefits those who quickly give up using context clues because they are overwhelmed by the unknown words. It provides students with a framework for using context clues to conprehend vocabulary and uses five steps.

1. Analyze the reading to identify words which are essential to the content and which may be unfamiliar or difficult for students.

2. Using either my words or the words of the text, write out the sentence using these words and underline them.

3. Put the words in list form on the chalkboard and call upon individual students to explain what they THINK the word means. Ask others to agree or disagree.

4. Ask the entire class to reach a consensus for the meaning of the word and write the meaning on the board. Continue doing this for all the remaining words.

5. Write the words as they appear in the text or in the sentences you wrote.

6. Write the words as they appear in the text or in the sentences written. Ask students if they wish to keep their definition or redefine the word. They need to give reasons for their decision.

TEACHER THINK A-LOUDS

Teacher think a-louds model "the kinds of strategies a skilled reader uses during reading and points out specifically what they are doing to cope with a particular comprehension problem" (Davey, 1983, p. 44). Teacher think a-louds use what is known about how skilled readers read (Allington, 1977; Paris and Myers, 1981; Pearson, 1985; Whimbey, 1985) and help low achievers clarify their views of reading and their use of the strategies, by verbalizing their own thoughts while reading orally. It uses teacher-modeled thinking a-loud (Palincsar and Ransom, 1988) to activate comprehension and metacognition. To provide mental modeling, teachers must focus on teaching students how to monitor their comprehension and how to fix a comprehension breakdown (Davey, 1983). She suggests this is accomplished by doing the following when reading aloud.

1. Make predictions yourself.

2. Describe to the students the pictures you have forming in your head about the information.

3. Share an analogy and link prior knowledge with the new information in the reading.

4. Verbalize a confusing point.

5. Demonstrate a fix-up strategy.

DIRECTED READING THINKING APPROACH (DRTA)

The Directed Reading Approach is a general plan actively involves students in the reading process as does the Teacher Think A-Louds. It requires students to predict what is going to occur in a selection and set purposes for reading. It encourages children to think as they read. While reading, students check their predictions seeking evidence in the selection (Stauffer, 1969). It helps readers construct meaning from the text and is useful in helping children interact with the material and improve comprehension through the use of making predictions in the form of questions. DRTA involves the following steps:

1. Make predictions from the title, pictures, and/or portions read.

2. Read and discuss the selection, generating questions on what was read and new questions and predictions.

3. Evaluate what was read and relate it to prior knowledge.

(Burns and Roe, 1981; Stauffer, 1969)

In doing DRTA, low achieving students learn to anticipate the text. Making predictions keeps

low-achievers on task, motivated to read, and most importantly, focused on reading for meaning, something that they are not usually involved in (Allington, 1977; Anderson et al., 1985; Burchby, 1988; Duffey and Roehler, 1988; FItzgerald, 1983).

DIRECT EXPLANATION

Direct explanation goes beyond what we know works in teacher read a-louds and direct instruction through the use of DRTA. Direct explanation is based on research on "think a-louds" (see above), as well as on comprehension instruction research (Duffy et al., 1987; Herrnmann, 1986). Modeling a-loud, as Duffy et al. puts it, "minimizes the guesswork in learning how reading works," (1988, p. 763). Direct explanation emphasizes helping students understand how the reading process works. It activates prior knowledge about a topic and uses it to make sense and construct meaning out of what is read (Anderson et al., 1985; Duffy and Roehler, 1987; Palincsar and Ransom, 1988). When used with low achievers, it visibly models invisible reasoning processes that good readers use to make sense out of the text (Duffy and Roehler, 1988). Research on comprehension of good and poor readers shows that good readers use strategies naturally, while low achievers lack the ability to do this. Using direct explanation or "metal modeling" with low achievers helps them understand HOW the reading process works, become more strategic, and thus,

better able comprehend what they read. Direct explanation includes the following steps:

1. Activate the student's prior knowledge of the the selection topic by discussing the title, pictures, and topic, and have them share experiences that relate to the topic.

2. "Think" out loud to model when reasoning process should be used by looking for context clues.

3. "Think"out loud to model how to use the reasoning process to repair the comprehension breakdown.

4. Check to see how the students interpreted the modeling information by asking them to tell or show when and how to use the reasoning process. If understood, provide supportive feedback; if not understood, provide ongoing cues, analogies, metaphors or other forms of elaboration.

5. Share the title and pictures again and ask the students to predict what the selection will be about. Remind the students that when they come to difficult words they are to try and figure them out by using the reasoning process.

6. Discuss predictions made earlier, as well as individual use of the reasoning process.

7. Close by summarizing the content of the selection and when and how to use the reasoning process.

8. Provide opportunites for students to practice using the reasoning process.

RECIPROCAL TEACHING

While Direct Explanation is aimed to show students how to construct meaning from the story, reciprocal teaching, at the end of a lesson shows students how to understand the author's message. It provides a framework for students to work together to understand what was read and focuses on discussion and critical thinking using strategies of questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting (Anderson et al., 1985; Herrmann, 1988; Palincsar and Brown, 1984; Palincsar, 1987). Palincsar further suggests the use of reciprocal teaching works best with small groups (1987, p. 60). She recommends patience and repetition.

In reciprocal teaching, teachers model good questions that help children identify important or main-idea information and help to generate questions of those having difficulty. Summarizing is used to ensure comprehension of main idea and important information based on what was read. Clarifying encourages comprehension and identifies which aspect of the text poses a breakdown in comprehension. Last, but not least, reciprocal teaching includes predicting to activate prior knowledge, upcoming events, and provide a link between what the child already knows about a certain topic and what new knowledge a child acquires through reading (Palincsar, 1987).

Herrmann (1988) suggests a six step procedure in teaching reciprocal teaching.

1. Read the text to them and have students tell what they expect or would like to learn from the selection. Summarize the predictions and if appropriate add your own.

2. Read a small portion of the text aloud, paragraph by paragraph.

3. Ask questions about the content and invite answers. Invite individuals to share additional questions generated while reading the selection.

4. Summarize what has been read by identifying the gist of the segment and explain how you arrived at this summary.

5. Lead a discussion to clarify any words or ideas that are unclear or confusing.

6. Signal preparation to move on to the next portion of the selection by eliciting predictions regarding upcoming content. Select a student to be the next "teacher."

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

In order to teach comprehension strategies to low achievers, low achievers need frameworks in which to activate, organize, and link prior knowledge with new knowledge (Allington, 1983, Bristow, 1985; Pearson, 1985). Frameworks for doing this include KWLs and Semantic Mapping.

What I Know, What I Want to Know and What I have Learned (KWL)

The KWL strategy, developed by Donna Ogle (1986), is designed to be used with non-fiction reading selections. This process provides a framework for constructing meaning from reading selections by activating prior knowledge through brainstorming, defining purposes for new knowledge and acknowledging what was learned. This can be model by teachers, as well as used in written guides and then later used by students independently. Steps in this process include:

1. Brainstorm what is already KNOWN about a topic.
2. Students write what they THINK they know about a topic on a carefully organized sheet (See Appendix).
3. Together students and teacher generate and record questions they want to have answered.
4. Students read to find answers to their questions and confirmation of what they have LEARNED.

If all questions are not answered, students can use other resources to find information concerning their questions. This enables the student to actively particpate and monitor the reading process (Carr and Ogle, 1987).

SEMANTIC MAPPING

This strategy, developed by Johnson and Pearson (1985), facilitates abilites to classify and organize information on

what was read. It visually displays words and relationships among the ideas they represent (Cullinan, 1982). Using semantic mapping organizes and interrelates essential idea and supporting details, helps clarify concepts and show that language has meaning. "It allows students to tie in new information to a child's already existing knowledge structure through the use of a map" (Stahl and Vancil, 1986, p. 65).

When used in interactive discussions, in both large and small groups, students anticipate being called on and hopefully are formulating possible ideas, answers, or vocabulary. This benefits those who actively participate. as well as those who remain passively involved.

STORY MAP

Story maps are graphic representations of the structure of a story. They give students a structure for retelling the story and defining the elements of a story - setting, characters, problems/goals, events, resolutions, and theme. Story maps help students construct meaning, noting not only the elements of a story, but also their relationships. Story retellings enhance and extend students' comprehension (Johnson and Louis, 1987).

SECTION 3

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES USED TO INVESTIGATE PROBLEM

SUBJECTS

The eight subjects chosen for this study were below grade level reading-achieving students from a class of fifth graders assigned by the principal and fourth grade teachers from the previous year. These 4 boys and 4 girls. These students entry level reading performance was .5 - 2.5 grade levels behind. Each of the subjects had been previously homogeneously grouped for reading.

I teach at Kelloggsville Christian School, a private school located in a middle class, suburban neighborhood in Kentwood, Michigan. Most of these students have attended a Christian School since Kindergarten. All of their parents have completed at least four years of high school, and some have completed four years of college. They, too, for the most part have attended Christian schools. Thus, these children come from homes in which reading is at least moderately appreciated, and reading materials are readily available.

DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENT

This action research project implemented children's literature in heterogeneously-grouped reading instruction, in order to assess its effectiveness on student reading achievement and attitudes towards reading. I incorporated a variety of large and small groups, cooperative groups, and individual learning methods to help meet the needs of my students. Reading strategies to improve comprehension included DRTA-Directed Reading Thinking Approach, predicting, and confirming, guided reading, KWLs (What I Know, What I Want to Know and What I have Learned) semantic mapping and contextual redefinition (See Literature Review and Appendix).

Beginning the first week of school, I tested each student using the San Diego Quick Assessment and Ekwall Reading Inventory to obtain the oral, silent, and listening comprehension level of the students. After determining at which grade level my students read, I gave the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, a standardized test, to assess the reading comprehension of each student during the second week of school. Using the information from these tests, I selected 8 students who were achieving below grade-level reading scores.

I also gave them a student attitude survey, a reading habits questionnaire. To find out what they believed reading to be, I gave them a Reading Is Checklist. At the end of the treatment, I gave them a Reading Treatment Evaluation to evaluate the program in their own words.

Because I agree with Richard Anderson, Paul Wilson, and Linda Fielding (1988) that "time spent reading books is the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade" (p. 297), I increased the amount of children's literature and reading materials of various reading levels in my room. Books, both fiction and nonfiction, newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines were made available to students in the room. Weekly library periods provided more access to literature.

Beginning with the second week of school, I began working on the attitudes of my below grade-level students towards reading by promoting the joy of reading. I read stories, poems, and riddles to the class, did book talks, and set aside time each day for students to read independently (Allington, 1983: Anderson et al., 1985) and Sustained, Quiet, UnInterrupted Reading Time (Korbin, 1988). I took time to individually help my reluctant readers choose books they might wish to read. During this time, we discussed that each child had different abilities in

different areas, and that this year we would collaborate together so that each child felt good about what he or she was doing in fifth grade.

My reading instruction then consisted of a children's literature-based approach taught to a heterogeneous group of students in both whole class and small cooperative group settings. The eight below grade level achieving students, who previously had been tracked into a homogeneous group for reading remained in my classroom and were part of the heterogeneous class group and small cooperative groups for reading instruction.

Children's literature was used to teach reading. Multiple copies of high interest children's literature, both fiction and non-fiction, which integrated our social studies, science, and language curriculum were purchased. During reading instruction, each child had his or her own personal copy to use to read and discuss, as suggested by Donlon (1976). The focus of reading instruction and the whole class and cooperative group times was to read, discuss what was read, and react personally to it.

During whole-group, guided-reading instruction, a variety of direct reading and thinking instructional strategies were first modeled by the teacher and later practiced by the students. As Anderson said,

"...good readers use good strategies" (1985, p.15). I "thought aloud" and modeled the thought processes and some of the strategies that good readers use to comprehend what they read -DRTA, KWLs, Contextual Redefinition (See literature review). I also visualized a strategy vital for metacognition called "semantic mapping" (See Literature Review). Strategies were taught to the below-grade level achieving students so that they would learn to actively monitor their reading comprehension, both verbally and silently (See Literature Review).

Strategies necessary for the comprehension of the text were taught in the context of the literature studied. Emphasis was placed on the DRTA strategy using predicting and confirming. This strategy was practiced during whole-class guided reading, cooperative group readings, discussions, and novel extention activities. I also used Direct Explanation and Reciprocal Teaching with both vocabulary and reading comprehension activities. Other strategies included semantic mapping, story mapping, paired reading, and KWLs (What I Know,.What Want to learn, and what I have Learned).

The required fifth grade reading skills found in the Houghton Mifflin Reading Series were taught in the context of the children's literature and the content area subjects when the researcher felt they could be

taught in the most meaningful way. Caution was taken to avoid "basalizing" the literature according to Goodman (1988). Additional reinforcement and review were given to the students when they needed it, both in heterogeneous groups and individually, through means of activities, games, learning centers, and peer tutoring.

To promote vocabulary development, I used the students' prior knowledge and what they were reading to construct meaning. Words introduced prior to reading were only those which were vital to the understanding of the selection. While reading, I would rarely have them stop to look up a word, instead using the context to form meaning and substitute words or phrases.

A reading incentive program was implemented with RAX restaurants. For every five books a student read either at home or at school, a child would receive a free meal at the restaurant. Classroom incentives also included books, bookmarks, and posters. Monthly book orders through Trumpet and Troll were made available.

To enlist the support of the parents of my below-grade level achieving students, my weekly newsletter included information on our reading program for that year concerning what we were reading and the activities their children were doing in class

as well as the overall progress in reading. Parents were asked to keep track of their child's responses to the implemented program and let me know at parent teacher conferences.

SECTION 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

RESEARCH QUESTION # 1

What changes occur in the reading attitudes of the low-achieving student?

The Student Attitude Survey was given to the low-achieving students in September 1988, prior to the treatment, and again in May 1989, after the treatment. It used a 5 point Likert Scale. In comparing the Student Attitude Survey data, the low-achieving students showed significant changes (+ 0.46) in their attitudes toward reading after implementation of the treatment. The students' average response regarding the statement. # 1 - "I like to read," showed a significant increase (+0.76). Six of the eight students showed an increase in their overall desire to read while two students' responses did not change concerning this statement. This corresponds positively with four of the students indicating in the post-treatment Reading Habits Questionnaire that they liked to read more before going to bed. Seven of the eight students showed a positive increase (+0.63) for # 12 - "When I am at school, I like to read." This corresponds positively with four of the eight students who responded in the Reading Habits Questionnaire that # 9 - " Reading

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

STATEMENT	Group Average Pre-test	Post test
1. I like to read.	3.62	4.38
2. I like to have someone read to me.	4.00	4.63
3. I like to go to the library.	3.88	4.13
4. I like to get books as gifts.	3.63	4.63
5. I like to buy books.	3.50	4.25
6. I like to read out-loud.	3.25	4.00
7. I like to read silently.	3.88	4.63
8. My mom reads to me.	3.50	3.00
9. My dad reads to me.	3.38	3.25
10. I like to read to someone.	2.50	4.38
11. I would rather watch T.V. than read. *	3.25	3.38
12. When I am at school I like to read.	3.75	4.38
13. When I am at home I like to read.	3.25	3.88
14. My mom likes to read.	4.25	4.50
15. My dad likes to read.	4.25	4.63
16. I like to be grouped with people who read like I do.	3.00	2.75
17. I like to be in reading groups like last year.	2.50	2.38

A Likert Scale was used to calculate the mean with points as follows : A Lot = 5 Sometimes = 4 A Little = 3 Not at all = 2 ? = 1

* Likert Scale scoring on negative question was as follows: A Lot = 2 Sometimes = 3 A Little = 4 Not at all = 5 ? = 1

Entire questionnaire with tallied responses can be found in the Appendix.

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

STATEMENT	CHANGE FROM PRE-TEST TO POST TEST
1. I like to read.	.76
2. I like to have someone read to me.	.63
3. I like to go to the library.	.25
4. I like to get books as gifts.	1.00
5. I like to buy books.	.75
6. I like to read out-loud.	.75
7. I like to read silently.	.75
8. My mom reads to me.	-.50
9. My dad reads to me.	-.13
10. I like to read to someone.	1.88
11. I would rather watch T.V. than read. *	.13
12. When I am at school I like to read.	.63
13. When I am at home I like to read.	.63
14. My mom likes to read.	.25
15. My dad likes to read.	.38
16. I like to be grouped with people who read like I do.	-.25
17. I like to be in reading groups like last year.	-.12

** The average change was +.46

STUDENT READING HABITS

QUESTIONNAIRE

STATEMENT	PRE-TEST YES	PRE-TEST NO	POST-TEST YES	POST-TEST NO
1. Do you like to read before you go to bed?	3	5	7	1
2. Do you think you are a poor reader?	0	8	4	4
3. Are you interested in what other people read?	4	4	7	1
4. Is reading your favorite subject in school?	0	8	4	4
5. If you could do anything you wanted to do, would reading be one of them you would choose?	0	8	6	2
6. Do you think you are a good reader for your age?	5	3	7	1
7. Do you think that most things are more fun than reading?	3	5	3	5
8. Do you like to answer questions about what you read?	0	8	4	4
9. Does reading make you feel good?	2	6	6	2
10. Do you like to take reading tests?	0	8	0	8
11. Do you like to do the workbook pages that go along with the readers?	0	8	0	8
12. Do you like to read our readers?	1	7	0	8
13. Do you like to read with other children who read like you do, in the same group?	1	7	5	3
14. Do you like to read longer books (novels)?	1	7	8	0
15. Do you like to do skills?	1	7	8	0

made me feel good," after the implementation of the reading program.

Thus, these data show that when low-achieving students are given a more positive reading experience and more time to read literature, they gain more confidence in their ability and do view reading more positively. This is consistent with the research done by Allington (1983), Anderson et al. (1985), Borko and Eisenhart (1986), and Bristow (1985) and Eldredge and Butterfield (1985).

A notable increase (+0.75) in the low-achieving students' responses to the Student Attitude Survey item # 5 - "I like to buy books," may have had some relevance to the amount of times during the school year when they were able to buy books from the Trumpet and Troll Book Clubs. Five of the eight students were able to buy books as incentives by their parents, something I discovered at the end of my study, upon discussing the reading growth of the child with their parent(s). All eight students showed an even greater increase (+1.00) for item # 4 - "I like to get books as gifts." The researcher believes this is due to an increase in the amount of books given by the teacher during the school year as incentives and Christmas presents.

The greatest significant change (+1.88) occurred in the increase for item # 10 - "I like to read to someone." Seven of the eight students showed an increase in this area. When asked individually who they felt they liked to read to on the post Attitude Survey, I received statements ranging

from younger brothers and sisters to parents. This increase in attitude positively correlates with item. #6 - "I like to read out-loud" (+0.75), and item # 7 - "I like to read silently" (+0.75).

This significant increase is also found in item # 13 - "When I'm at home I like to read" (+0.63). After spending time reading orally and silently in a cooperative learning situation and pairs, I believe that these students not only were more willing to read to others, but felt more confident in their ability to read with someone and also in themselves, their comprehension, and their ability to read out-loud. This agrees with evidence found in studies by Allington (1983), Anderson et al. (1985), Bristow (1985), and Eldredge and Butterfield (1986).

Althought there were significant positive increases (+0.63) by students to item # 2 - "I like to have someone read to me." there were significant decreases in items # 8 and # 9 (mother = -0.50, father = - 0.13) about having their parents read to them. The researcher believes that this may be due to parents reading less to students during the school year, parents reading less to their children at this age. and on a positive note, children becoming more confident in their reading and taking pleasure in it as they master the vocabulary and comprehension strategies while reading independently. The fact that the teacher read to the class could also have affected positive attitudes.

It was interesting to note that the average score for item # 11 - "I would rather watch T.V. than read" did not change. All eight students felt exactly the same about watching T.V. as opposed to reading, and all individual responses remained the same. The researcher feels that this is sometimes their way of recreation. Although, when asked in the Reading Habits Questionnaire, item # 5 - "If you could do anything you wanted to do, would reading be one of the activities you would choose? the responses changed from no to yes for six of the eight students. When comparing reading to watching T.V., however, the researcher feels that the response to watch T.V. would take presidence over reading.

When asked items # 16 and 17 about being grouped homogeneously as they had traditionally been, six of the eight students responded quite negatively to being tracked for reading (# 16 = -0.25 and # 17 + -0.12). This reinforces what Goodlad (1984) and Oakes (1985) found. While one student expressed fear of being mocked and ridiculed for his inability to read, five students responded that they would not "like to be in a reading group where people read like they did." This reinforces what Borko and Eisenhart (1986), Covington (1984), and Heibert (1983) found.

When given the chance to further discuss this, common student responses included:

- "Groups are boring and the stories are not interesting. I never get a good, long story."
- "All we do are workbooks and pages."
- "We never do plays because we can't read."

This correlates with the students' attitudes noted by the Reading Habits Questionnaire. The researcher believes that the students, given an alternative, enjoyed not only being with their other, better reading classmates, but also participating in the various reading activities. This difference is noted not only by students in what they do, but also in how they are treated (Goodlad, 1984; Oakes, 1985).

In their responses on the open-ended Reading Treatment Evaluation in May 1989, all eight students responded very positively to questions about how reading was taught in our classroom, stating that they had never enjoyed reading as much. Seven of the eight mentioned that they hoped that they would get do read novels again next year and stay in the classroom doing the same thing as the rest of the students in the classroom. Their responses indicated a positive attitude to reading as well as a growth in self-esteem. One student's response was, "I never get to read, you know READ." When inteviewed further, her response was, "I just answer questions on a page and that's it."

These responses correlate with what Goodland (1984) and Oakes (1985) report concerning the negatives of ability grouping.

In summary, from all the reading attitude data, all eight students showed significant positive responses to reading after implementation of the reading program. All eight students positively commented on the pleasure of being read to, reading lots of different kinds of books, and the discussions about what was read, something that Eldredge and Butterfield (1985), Goodman (1986), and Shumaker and Shumaker (1988) found when working with low achievers. One student commented, "I could always ask for help if I didn't get it." Four students responded that they had to work harder, but enjoyed reading this year. Three students became more interested in what others read.

Review of the table showing the results of the Reading Checklist regarding "Reading is..." listed positive and negative attributes to describe reading, old and new ideas of reading, and populations that use reading. Students were given directions to place a check in from of <u>all</u> the statements they agreed with when they thought of reading. This was done in September 1988, prior to the treatment, and again in May 1989, after the treatment. The results indicated a marked increase in understanding that reading is fun (+ 37%), interesting (+37%), and important (+75%). The significance of this data is that the eight below grade

STUDENT READING CHECKLIST

	PRE-TEST	POST TEST
READING IS.....		
NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES		
Hard	0%	0%
Not needed	13%	0%
Boring	63%	0%
Work	25%	13%
POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES		
Easy	75%	60%
Important	0%	75%
Interesting	63%	100%
Fun	63%	100%
OLD IDEAS		
Workbooks	63%	0%
Worksheets	63%	0%
Banners Readers	63%	0%
NEW IDEAS		
Learning	50%	100%
Thinking	25%	75%
Books	75%	100%
Newspapers	88%	88%
POPULATION		
For School	63%	88%
For kids	25%	100%
For Grown-ups	0%	88%
Done Alone	13%	75%
Done with Someone	25%	75%

STUDENT READING CHECKLIST

CHANGE FROM PRE-TEST TO POST-TEST

READING IS.....

NEGATIVE ATTRIBUTES

Hard	0
Not needed	-13%
Boring	-63%
Work	-12%

GROUP AVERAGE - DOWN 25.25%

POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

Easy	-15%
Important	75%
Interesting	37%
Fun	37%

GROUP AVERAGE - UP 33.5%

OLD IDEAS

Workbooks	-63%
Worksheets	-63%
Banners Readers	-63%

GROUP AVERAGE - DOWN 63%

NEW IDEAS

Learning	50%
Thinking	50%
Books	25%
Newspapers	0%

GROUP AVERAGE - UP 31.25%

POPULATION

For School	25%
For kids	75%
For Grown-ups	88%
Done Alone	62%
Done with Someone	50%

GROUP AVERAGE - UP 60%

** OVERALL AVERAGE CHANGE - 7.3%

READING TREATMENT EVALUATION

CORRELATED COMMENTS

DIRECTIONS

Please answer the following questions as specifically as you can.

1. What did you like about Reading this year.
   - I liked to read the books. (6)
   - I liked talking about the books.
   - I liked to do the questions together.
   - I liked it when you read to us and we got to figure out words. (The researcher feels this response refers to figuring out the "meanings".)

2. After reading novels for this school year, have your impressions of reading changed?

   Yes 8 No 0

   Why or Why not?

Reasons

   - The other books (Banners books) are boring. They have boring stories in them. (2)
   - The stories were interesting and makes you want to read.
   - Because it expands your imagination.
   - Because now I like to read a lot better.
   - Because I like to read more to myself & and I like it when you read to us.
   - I liked reading the novels and better stories. They tell you everything not just a part.
   - I just like reading a lot more.

3. After reading novels with your classmates in our classroom what did you like or dislike about it?
   - I liked doing it together.
   - I liked doing the activities. Last year I just did workbook pages.
   - I really had to think to answer the questions.
   - I didn't feel like a dummy. (3)
   - I had a helper.
   - I didn't feel like I was behind.

* ( ) - number of like responses

level students attitudes were positively influenced by the implementation of this reading program.

Looking more closely, students became much more aware of that reading is necessary for both kids (+75%) and grown-ups (+88%); that it is reading books (+25%), newspapers (0%), and as one student added lots of poems, comics, and plays. Significant increases also occurred in their beliefs that reading is done both with someone (+50%), and alone (+62%). This attitude on the part of the students shows that students viewed reading not only as important (+75%), but also as an important part of their learning (+50%), and thinking (+50%). The researcher feels they gained some insight into the value of reading and what they were doing with it. This may have had some effect also on the increase in their positive attitudes towards reading and it becoming an intrinsic part of their learning.

RESEARCH QUESTION # 2

<u>What changes occur in the reading achievement of the</u> low-achieving student?

To analyze and compare the pre- and post-test achievement scores from the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Level D, Forms 1 & 2 were given in September 1988, and May 1989, after the implementation of the reading program. Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) Scores were used because these scores show each student's level of achievement within a

GATES-MACGINITIE READING TEST RESULTS

NCE SCORES

	PRE-TEST SCORES			POST TEST SCORES		
STUDENT	VOCAB.	COMP.	TOTAL	VOCAB.	COMP.	TOTAL
Trisha	31	62	46	63	66	65
Dawn	45	44	44	78	80	81
Brian	50	32	42	78	59	68
Tony	41	44	42	65	55	60
Bryan	39	39	39	50	61	56
Greg	37	29	33	55	57	58
Jodi	31	26	28	55	52	54
Sara	27	23	24	74	59	65

GATES-MACGINITIE READING TEST RESULTS

NCE SCORE CHANGES

STUDENT	VOCAB.	COMP.	TOTAL
Sara	47	36	+41
Dawn	33	36	+37
Brian	28	27	+26
Jodi	24	26	+26
Greg	18	28	+25
Trisha	32	4	+19
Tony	24	11	+18
Bryan	11	22	+17

Average gain in Vocabulary = + 27.13

Average gain in Comprehension = + 23.75

Average gain in Total Scores = + 26.13

normed group of students at the same grade level. On this test. a student who maintains about the same oosition from the beginning to the end of the year is improving in reading at a rate that is typical for students at his or her level of achievement. The use of this score helps minimize the effects of the ceiling effect.

STUDENT	INCREASE in NCE
Sara	+ 41
Dawn	+ 37
Brian	+ 26
Jodi	+ 26
Greg	+ 25
Trisha	+ 19
Tony	+ 18
Bryan	+ 17

Average gain in total NCE scores is 26.13

Review of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Results shows significant increases in achievement occurred for each student. The average NCE increase is notable for vocabulary (+ 27.13), comprehension (+ 23. 75), and overall reading achievement (+ 26.13).

Extended Scale Scores (ESSs), like NCEs measures reading achievement in equal units. They can also be used for evaluating the effects of curricular innovations.

GATES-MACGINITIE READING TEST RESULTS

EXTENDED SCALE SCORES

(ESSs)

STUDENT	PRE-TEST ESSs TOTALS	POST-TEST ESSs TOTALS	DIFFERENCE
Trisha	490	557	+ 67
Dawn	485	603	+118
Brian	479	566	+ 87
Tony	479	543	+ 64
Bryan	471	531	+ 60
Greg	457	537	+ 80
Jodi	444	528	+ 84
Sara	432	553	+121

Average gain in ESSs is 85.13

Average achievement at the beginning of 5th grade (5.1) is represented by an ESS (Extended Scale Score) of 500, and the average gain in achievement during thr 5th grade vear is (5.1 to 6.1) is represented by 25 points on the scale. Individual ESS scores increased.

STUDENT	INCREASE IN ESS
Sara	+ 121
Dawn	+ 118
Brian	+ 87
Jodi	+ 84
Greg	+ 80
Trisha	+ 67
Tony	+ 64
Bryan	+ 60

For complete results see Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Results - ESS Scores. The average increase for ESS was 85.13, with some students testing out of level D. During the treatment, two students, Dawn and Sara, received eye glasses for the first time. This could account for the greater increases for these two students. Of the six remaining students, the average gain in ESSs was +73.67.

To determine if reading achievement of low-achieving students changed, pre and post tests from the Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series were also administered.

GATES-MACGINITIE READING TEST RESULTS

GRADE EQUIVALENT SCORES

(GEs)

STUDENT	PRE-TEST GEs TOTALS	POST-TEST GEs TOTALS	DIFFERENCE
Trisha	4.6	* 7.4	3.0
Dawn	4.5	* 10.1	5.6
Brian	4.3	* 8.0	3.7
Tony	4.3	* 7.0	2.7
Bryan	4.0	6.5	2.5
Greg	3.6	6.7	3.1
Jodi	3.2	6.2	3.0
Sara	2.7	* 7.6	4.9

* The average grade equivalent change is 3.56.

Note however * five students tested out of the norms for grade level testing for Level D.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN READING TEST RESULTS

TABLE # 1

STUDENT	PRE - TEST NO. CORRECT	POST-TEST NO. CORRECT	CHANGE
Trisha	83	173	90
Bryan	79	175	96
Tony	76	171	95
Greg	72	159	87
Sara	69	168	99
Dawn	58	183	125
Brian	57	170	113
Jodi	53	173	120

* Average Change in total number correct is 103.13.

HOUGHTON-MIFFLIN READING TEST RESULTS

TABLE # 2

STUDENT	PRE-TEST % CORRECT	POST-TEST % CORRECT	CHANGE
Trisha	32	84	52
Bryan	31	85	54
Tony	30	83	53
Greg	28	78	50
Sara	27	82	55
Dawn	23	89	66
Brian	22	83	61
Jodi	21	84	63

* Average Change in Percentage of Number Correct is 56.75%

Level L (5.0) was used for the low-achieving students. Their pre- and post-test scores showed an increase in the number of correct items for all individual students (See Houghton-Mifflin Reading Tests Table # 1) and an average increase of 103.13 for the group. The percentages of the number correct increased for individual students (See Houghton-Mifflin Reading Tests Table # 2) and the average increase for the group was 56.75%.

In summary, each student showed growth of more than 1.0 grade level equivalency in one year. All students reached the criterion of 6.0 grade equivalency according to the results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test at the end of the treatment, even though some students tested out of the level D.

RESEARCH QUESTION # 3

Do low-achieving students read more books?

During this school year, the low achievers read more than they did the previous year in the fourth grade according to the parents of the subjects and the subjects themselves. They read 9 books with the whole class and 9 books in small groups. They each read 8 books for book reports at home on their own time. This does not include Battle of the Books books, books they read in SQUIRT time, or books we read for Social Studies or Science projects. During the treatment, the subjects read a total of 326 books, including those read independently. For each individual's total number of books read during the treatment see the table entitled Total Number of Books Read. For list of the titles of books used, see table entitled Reading Treatment - Children's Literature Titles found in the Appendix.

RESEARCH QUESTION # 4

What other teacher perceived problems and benefits will occur, and what are the reflective insights of the teacher?

The journal notes taken during the time the treatment was being implemented show support for the positive data collected from the student Reading Attitude Survey, Reading

TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS READ

STUDENT	BOOKS READ AS WHOLE CLASS	BOOKS READ IN SMALL GROUPS	BOOKS READ INDIVIDUALLY*	TOTAL
Jodi	9	9	31	49
Dawn	9	9	30	48
Sara	9	9	27	45
Trisha	9	9	26	44
Greg	9	9	20	38
Tony	9	9	19	37
Brian	9	9	15	33
Bryan	9	9	14	32

TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS READ = 326

* Books read in Battle of the Books, Book Reports, SQUIRT, Social Studies and Science.

Habits Questionnaire, Reading Checklist, and Reading Treatment Evaluation.

During September, once the below grade level students realized they were not going to leave the room for reading, but instead would receive reading instruction with all the other students in the room, I noted their curiousity and gradual openess to this new reading program, something that Shumaker and Shumaker (1988) found to be true. Students' expressions of relief and willingness to work indicated to me that they were excited about trying this.

In the journal notes, I noted an increase in active student participation while reading independently. At first, SQUIRT time was "looking" at pictures and little on-task behavior. Students would look around and give every excuse from having to find a book to, "It's boring." The notes in subsequent weeks indicated that gradual shifts in their interest were observed. More on-task reading happened both in SQUIRT time and other independent time, and there was less complaining about having to read.

This same increase in their involvement in the reading process continued in January, approximately at the end of first semester. At about that time, I noted more comments by some low-achieving students in whole-group instruction like, "Do we have to stop? You always stop at the good parts!" They were getting hooked on books! (Allington, 1983; Burchby, 1988; Cullinan, 1987; Eldredge and Butterfield, 1986; Shumaker and Shumaker, 1988). I also

noted about this time, when time for independent reading was finished, most of the low-achieving students would want to finish what they were reading. Low achievers were actively involved in reading and reading more as Bristow (1985) would agree.

It is interesting to me to note that, as the treatment progressed, parents who were frustrated early in the school year with the difficulties they were having encouraging their child to read, started to comment on the changes they saw in their child reading more at home. This included, one parent who said, "I found my child reading with a flashlight in bed. Can you believe that?" This was something this child did not do before. Several parents commented on noticing harder books being read instead of the easy ones. One parent indicated pleasure at being asked to take her daughter to Pooh's Corner to buy another book by the author of the book she had just finished reading.

Another observation I made in the journal notes, was that for the first two months, I did not feel that the students actively participated in predictions and discussions, althought they were very excited about what they were reading and showed positive attitudes toward classroom activities. In order to involve them more cognitively and socially, I used the cooperative learning strategy (Johnson and Johnson, 1984), of distributing participation by limiting everyone to speaking two times before a person could speak again.

At first this was quite strained, but my notes indicated that group members began to encourage each other to speak. A note from one observation was that a higher ability level student said, " .... Brian gave a really good idea. Do you want to hear it?" Brian's surprised reaction to this was also noted. Second semester journal notes indicated Brian was verbalizing more in class. Two weeks after this, three other students were noticed verbalizing more in their groups and asking questions like, "What about this idea? Could Matt be going to go with the Indians for good?" (Taken from predicting activity on October 25, 1988, on book Sign of the Beaver, by Elizabeth Speare).

Thus, all of the below grade level students gradually became more involved in predicting and volunteering ideas and opinions on what they had read as noted in my journal records. Reflecting on this, I think this happened because time was needed for the students to feel self-confident that their ideas were acceptable. Many times, below grade level students do not get involved in higher level thinking and are not confident in their own ability to read and actively do this.

In the notes taken comparing whole group discussions to small group discussions, there initially was more involvement by the low achieving students in the whole group discussions. I think it also took time for students to feel comfortable with the pairs and cooperative groups they were in. I also noted that there was a sense of anxiety on my

part that all students would have an opportunity to speak. There was also some anxiety as to whether higher ability level students would positively respond to working with students who were below grade level. After this student's comment, I observed more carefully the interactions of all the below grade level students to see if this was indeed happening. My journal notes indicate I gradually came to understand that I couldn't "rush" students working together cooperatively. This is also noted as a danger in cooperative learning according to Cohen (1986) and Johnston and Johnston (1984).

In the first two months I also noted that there was little interaction about the vocabulary. At that time, activities were designed to practice the vocabulary more in cooperative groups, two times a week. With these new activities, students practiced their vocabulary. This improved the vocabulary quiz scores of the low achieving students. I noted that two students asked to have these words as extra credit words on their spelling tests. After this initial request was implemented, all students attempted to learn new vocabulary words as part of extra credit work for spelling, according to their own timetable.

In comparing my notes on the responses to literature of the low achieving students from October to May, my notes indicated a development in the responses from short, quick statements - "I like the book, characters, etc." to "I like Winny because she really cared for the frog. She used the

special water on it, and now she knew she would never see Jess again." The notes indicated that more extensive responses like this showed more thinking and reflecting on the part of the student. Thus, I concluded that, when given the opportunity to learn strategies and do higher level thinking, low-achieving students do learn and practice these as well as higher-achieving students.

In data comparing the reading of books by the low-achieving students for Battle of the Books (a school-wide program in February and March), there was an increase in the amount of books read by each subject for this study from the previous year to the year involving the treatment. The librarian showed me that each of the children's involvement in Battle of the Books had previously been minimal. Each low-achieving child had previously read a minimum of four books. This year, the total for each child ranged from 7 - 14. There was also a variety of shorter and longer books read. This progress was noted and also verbalized by her to the students.

As the treatment was implemented, I had concern about managing the whole class, small group, and independent scheduling. Part of my frustration was due to scheduling "special classes" that year. It was difficult to schedule immediate reteaching after whole class instruction for students who needed it due to the lack of solid time blocks. It forced me to sometimes reschedule small groups and individual reteaching around independent reading times.

Sometimes this proved to be quite tricky and diminished how connected the lessons could be.

Finally, positive attitudes about reading were also seen in terms of the low-achieving students' actual involvement by their interest to read other materials across the curriculum, as well as them internally integrating what they had read in another subject and verbalizing it in class. This was very exciting to see!

SECTION 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. CONCLUSIONS

The growth in positive attitudes towards reading, shown by the low-achieving students when involved in a heterogeneously grouped, children's literature reading program was very exciting to see. The following results were documented and the related factors are hypothesized to have been influences on these.

1. Heterogeneous grouping of low-achieving students through the use of whole-class and small cooperative groups seemed to improve their attitudes to reading and their self-esteem.

2. The use of children's literature as the reading materials seemed to motivate low-achievers to read more and improve their attitudes towards reading.

3. Direct instruction of comprehension enhancing strategies through the techniques of DRTAs, KWLs, Contextual Redefinition, and Direct Explanation appeared to be vital for the understanding of the reading process for the low-achiever in monitoring his/her own reading comprehension.

4. Reading of children's literature incorporating strategies and skills taught in the context of the children's literature, appeared to enable the child to monitor his/her own reading comprehension.

5. Increased time spent reading appeared to directly correspond to reading achievement of low-achievers.

6. Use of activities such as Reading Incentives - RA: restaurants, prizes, and book orders: Sustained Quiet UnInterrrupted Reading, and end of book projects appeared to motivate low-achievers.

7. A classroom environment which emphasize cooperation appeared to build the self-esteem of the low-achievers. Low achievers seemed to learn more in these arrangements and became more actively involved in their own metacognition and the reading process.

According to this researcher, the greatest contributions toward the growth of positive attitudes are when the student has mastered strategies needed to comprehend what is read, and at the same time, feels confident and proud of his/her accomplishments. These low-achieving students who showed negative responses to reading and also had the greatest academic difficulties seemed more willing to attempt other curricular activities as the treatment progressed.

This study shows that when low-achieving students are given positive reading experiences, they do indeed achieve at least one year's growth in a heterogeneously grouped arrangement. However, this researcher feels that this will only happen through a combination of whole-class, small cooperative groups and individual reteaching instruction in a positive environment. Low-ability students need the extra academic and social-emotional reinforcement to develop strategies to increase their vocabulary and reading comprehension as well as improve their oral and silent reading. Low-achieving students also need that extra reinforcement in order to practice and master reading strategies. Students did learn to practice comprehension enhancing strategies and better monitor their understanding of what they read.

Furthermore, these students gained positive attitudes towards reading, read more, and seemed to enjoy reading. They also appeared more interested in other content area subjects. They were actively involved and interacted with each other, making it a positive experience for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has indicated that low achievers, when given positive reading experiences, do indeed achieve in a heterogeneously grouped arrangement with the use of children's literature. The following is a list of recommendations for further study and future projects.

1. Further research on the attitudinal and academic effects of the use of children's literature with low-achievers in heterogeneously-grouped arrangements should be conducted to verify the reliability and validity of the data, keeping in mind that a new set of subjects will bring their own limitations. It would also be interesting to do further researdh on the attitudinal and academic effects of this treatment on its present subjects to see if there would be any long-range effects.

2. In order to enhance this project, I would include even more small groups arranged according to the interests of the student. To structure more effective shared reading experiences on books read independently, I would have students begin by completing a form ahead of time with the title, author, main idea, new information learned, or elements of story mapping. This structure would better enable the students to focus their discussions. Another beneficial change would be a change in schedules, giving the classroom teacher a solid block of time in which to arrange a variety of reading and writing activities. Finally, I would continue developing literature guides that do not basalize the text as Goodman (1986) would say, but provide even more enriching experiences.

3. Classroom teachers should attempt to use a variety of heterogeneous arrangements with low-achievers in order to build background knowledge and actively participate in reading. When understanding of the reading process and

instruction happens for the teacher, he/she should be encouraged to incorporate children's literature as much as possible, actively teaching comprehension strategies to children in the class so that children learn to better comprehend what they read. Finally, teachers across the grade levels should work together to discuss the scope and sequence of curriculum.

4. School boards and administrators should encourage teachers to incorporate children's literature in their classrooms. They should encourage the purchase of quality children's literature to be used in libraries and classrooms as well as opportunities for their teachers to learn more about the reading process, children's literature, and strategies that build comprehension. Administrators should also encourage opportunities where teachers work together to structure the scope and sequence of curriculums. Last but not least, schools and administrators should also review grouping techniques and encourage heterogeneous arrangements where low-achievers achieve and learn from other members of varying ability.

5. Publishers should continue to upgrade basals and use original children's literature. Philosophical changes due to ability need to be reviewed. Publishers should also work to provide support materials that would enhance higher level comprehension, not just literal thinking. The focus would then be directed to higher level questioning and comprehesion strategies, rather than meaningless worksheets.

Finally, publishers should continue to produce quality trade books and support materials for use with children in the classroom.

IMPACT ON PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This study has been a fulfillment of an idea that I have had for my students, particularly the low-achievers I have worked with. I am committed to providing all students in my classroom with the best education possible. This study has made me more knowledgeable and confident in advocating for and working with low-achievers. I have become knowledgeable of the strategies necessary to help students learn to monitor their own comprehension, more confident, and more sensative to the needs of those who have difficulty learning. I feel this has translated into better classroom instruction and remediation for my students.

As a result, I feel that this study has been a catalyst for tremendous professional growth. Not only was I able to become familiar with the ERIC research system and find pertinent, current literature on a topic of personal interest to me, but I was also able to synthesize what I had read to design a project that would benefit my students. I know that my continued professional growth will come not only from reading current literature and attending classes, conferences, and workshops, but also from what I do with my students in my own classroom.

APPENDIX

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

STATEMENT	A LOT	SOMETIMES	A LITTLE	NOT AT ALL	?
1. I like to read.					
2. I like to have someone read to me.					
3. I like to go to the library.					
4. I like to get books as gifts.					
5. I like to buy books.					
6. I like to read out-loud.					
7. I like to read silently.					
8. My mom reads to me.					
9. My dad reads to me.					
10. I like to read to someone.					
11. I would rather watch T.V. than read. *					
12. When I am at school I like to read.					
13. When I am at home I like to read.					
14. My mom likes to read.					
15. My dad likes to read.					
16. I like to be grouped with people who read like I do.					
17. I like to be in reading groups like last year.					

A Likert Scale was used to calculate the mean with points as follows : A Lot = 5 Sometimes = 4 A Little = 3 Not at all = 2 ? = 1
* Likert Scale scoring on negative question was as follows: A Lot = 2 Sometimes = 3 A Little = 4 Not at all = 5 ? = 1

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

Tallied Student Responses - September 1988

STATEMENT	A LOT	SOMETIMES	A LITTLE	NOT AT ALL	?
1. I like to read.	0	5	3	0	
2. I like to have someone read to me.	2	4	2	0	
3. I like to go to the library.	2	3	3	0	
4. I like to get books as gifts.	0	6	1	1	
5. I like to buy books.	2	2	2	2	
6. I like to read out-loud.	0	4	2	2	
7. I like to read silently.	4	0	3	1	
8. My mom reads to me.	3	1	1	3	
9. My dad reads to me.	2	2	1	3	
10. I like to read to someone.	0	1	2	5	
11. I would rather watch T.V. than read. *	1	4	3	0	
12. When I am at school I like to read.	1	4	3	0	
13. When I am at home I like to read.	0	3	4	1	
14. My mom likes to read.	4	2	2	0	
15. My dad likes to read.	4	2	2	0	
16. I like to be grouped with people who read like I do.	0	4	0	4	
17. I like to be in reading groups like last year.	0	1	2	5	

STUDENT ATTITUDE SURVEY

Tallied Student Responses - May 1989

STATEMENT	A LOT	SOMETIMES	A LITTLE	NOT AT ALL	?
1. I like to read.	4	3	1	0	
2. I like to have someone read to me.	6	1	1	0	
3. I like to go to the library.	1	7	0	0	
4. I like to get books as gifts.	5	3	0	0	
5. I like to buy books.	2	6	0	0	
6. I like to read out-loud.	2	5	0	1	
7. I like to read silently.	5	3	0	0	
8. My mom reads to me.	1	1	3	3	
9. My dad reads to me.	1	2	2	2	
10. I like to read to someone.	3	5	0	0	
11. I would rather watch T.V. than read. *	1	4	2	1	
12. When I am at school I like to read.	3	5	0	0	
13. When I am at home I like to read.	0	7	1	0	
14. My mom likes to read.	4	4	0	0	
15. My dad likes to read.	5	3	0	0	
16. I like to be grouped with people who read like I do.	0	1	4	3	
17. I like to be in reading groups like last year.	0	0	3	5	

STUDENT READING HABITS

QUESTIONNAIRE

DIRECTIONS : Circle yes or no after reading each of the following statements.

STATEMENT

1.	Do you like to read before you go to bed?	Yes	No
2.	Do you think you are a poor reader?	Yes	No
3.	Are you interested in what other people read?	Yes	No
4.	Is reading your favorite subject in school?	Yes	No
5.	If you could do anything you wanted to do, would reading be one of them you would choose?	Yes	No
6.	Do you think you are a good reader for your age?	Yes	No
7.	Do you think that most things are more fun than reading?	Yes	No
8.	Do you like to answer questions about what you read?	Yes	No
9.	Does reading make you feel good?	Yes	No
10.	Do you like to take reading tests?	Yes	No
11.	Do you like to do the workbook pages that go along with the readers?	Yes	No
12.	Do you like to read our readers?	Yes	No
13.	Do you like to read with other children who read like you do, in the same group?	Yes	No
14.	Do you like to read longer books (novels)?	Yes	No
15.	Do you like to do skills?	Yes	No

STUDENT READING CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS:

Put a check in front of each of the following staements that you agree with. You may check as many as you would like.

READING IS .....

_____ easy

_____ not needed

_____ boring

_____ for kids

_____ fun

_____ interesting

_____ hard

_____ for grown-ups

_____ important

_____ work

_____ workbooks

_____ books

_____ learning

_____ worksheets

_____ Banners Readers

_____ done with someone

_____ thinking

_____ done alone

_____ newspapers

_____ for school

READING TREATMENT EVALUATION

DIRECTIONS

Please answer the following questions as specifically as you can.

1. What did you like about Reading this year.

2. After reading novels for this school year, have your impressions of reading changed? Yes No
Why or Why not?

3. After reading novels with your classmates in our classroom what did you like or dislike about it?

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE BOOKS USED

AUTHOR	TITLE OF BOOK
Armstrong, William	Sounder
Babbitt, Natalie	Tuck Everlasting
Banks, Lynn Reid	The Indian in the Cupboard
Burnford, Sheila	Incredible Journey *
Cleary, Beverly	Dear Mr. Henshaw
Coerr, Eleanor	Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes
DeClements, Barthe	Nothing's Fair in the Fifth Grade
Fritz, Jean	And Then What Happened Paul Revere?
Gwynne, Fred	A Chocolate Moose for Dinner*
Gwynne, Fred	The King Who Rained *
Hogrogian, Nonny	One Fine Day *
Keats, Ezra Jack	John Henry, An American Legend *
Gag, Wanda	Millions of Cats *
George, Jean Craighead	Julie of the Wolves
Kellogg, Steven	How Much is a Million?
Konigsburg, E. L.	From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler
Livingston, Myra Cohn	Space Songs *
Maruki, Toshi	Hiroshima No Pika *
Mathis, Sharon Bell	The Hundred Penny Box
Myller, Rolf	How Big is a Foot? *
O'Brien, Robert	Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of Nihm
O"Dell, Scott	Island of the Blue Dolphins

Rawls, Wilson	Where the Red Fern Grows *
Shaw, Charles G.	It Looked Like Spilt Milk *
Speare, Elizabeth George	The Sign of the Beaver
Sperry, Armstrong	Call It Courage
Sterling, Dorothy	Freedom Train
Taylor, Mildred	Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Van, Allsburg, Chris	Jumangi *

* = Read A-Loud Books

Rax®

Library Card

Read 5 books and get a Free Uncle Alligator Meal at RAX

Names Of Books Read	Librarian's Initials
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____

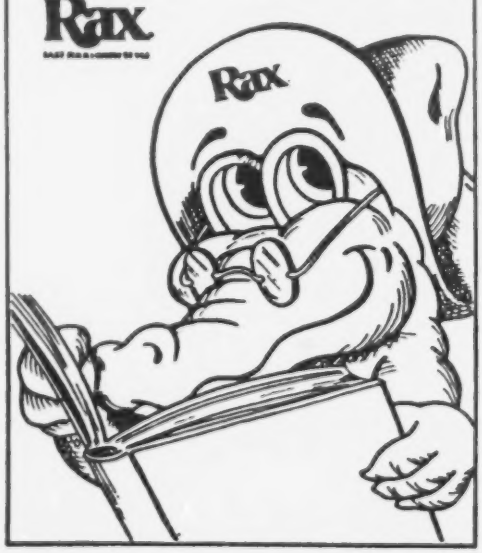
I promise I have read all the books listed on this card. My name is:

_____

RAX Counterperson: When five book titles have been filled in and the librarian has initialed each, please redeem this card for a FREE Uncle Al Kids Meal and issue this good reader a new RAX Library Card. Thank you, Uncle Al.

Good only at Rax

This offer not valid with any other coupons or discounts. Sales tax charged where applicable.

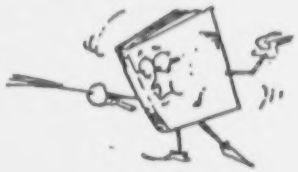


Reading
Incentive

Reading Definition

Reading is the process
of constructing meaning

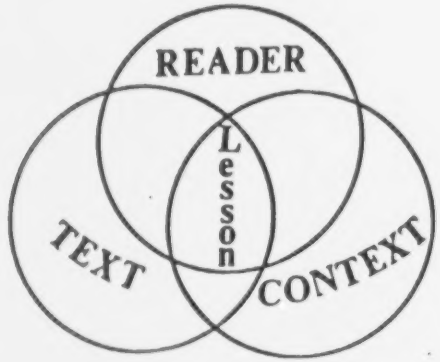
through the dynamic
interaction



among the reader's
existing knowledge,

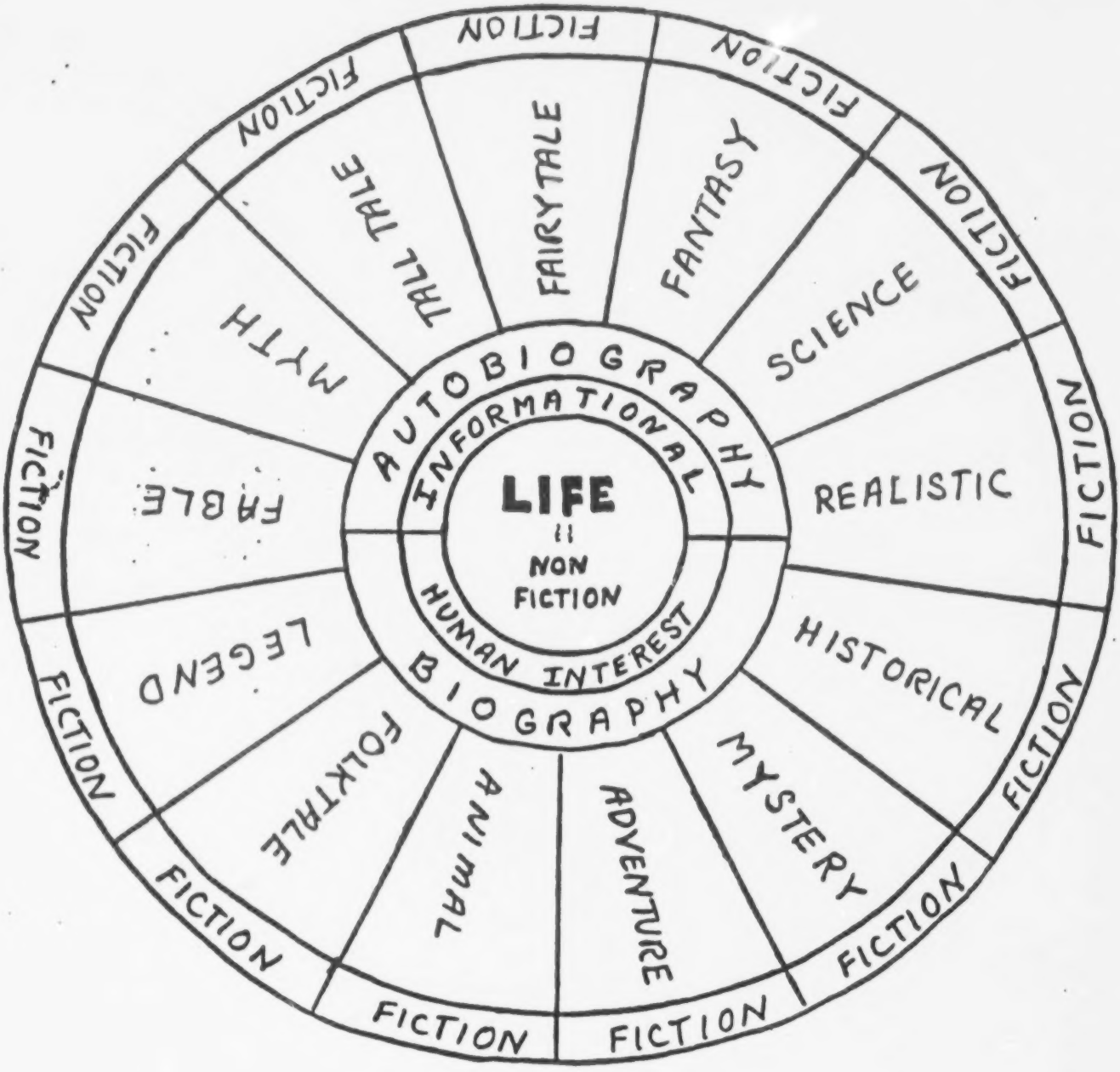
the information suggested by
the written language,

and the context of the
reading situation.



INSTRUCTION

INTRODUCTION – READING DEFINITION



Dr. Constance L. Marks

Received in MSU Children's Literature Class

Books I've Read

Date	Book / Author	Finished Yes / No	This book was: E = Easy M = Medium C = Challenging
104			105

FIVE FINGER METHOD FOR APPROPRIATE LEVEL

Students were encouraged to use the following method to select books they would read independently. They were encouraged to choose books that would be at their level -- not always too easy and never too difficult.

STEPS

1. Select a page near the middle of the book which is mostly in print.

2. Read the page and put one finger down on the table for each word that was unknown and couldn't be understood from the context. Proper Names do not count.

3. If all five fingers are down, the book is probably too difficult and a new book should be chosen.

New Words

fold

Word	Page #	What I think it means	What it really mea

1. Write word you're not sure of. and page #
2. Guess the meaning from the context.
3. Through discussion or by looking it up in the dictionary write the real meaning.
4. Fold paper to learn new words.

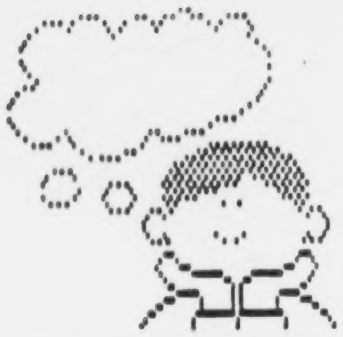
* Used when reading independently or in small groups

Used for Vocabulary.

Predicting and Confirming of Word in Context

File: Vocab	Before	After
retorted p 19		
suspiciously p 19		
remnants p 21		
Chapter 5 opportunity p 22		
precisely 23		
venture p23		
quivering p24		
splotches p 24		
nudged p 24		
instinct p 24		

Think Aloud



What is it?

Thinking Aloud is making thinking public. It's letting students in on the secret of how you (teacher) read. It involves modeling/demonstrating how you did something and/or how you thought about it.

Why use it?

When students (especially less able students) are provided with models and explanations of the reasoning involved in reading, they are better able to use the modeled strategies on their own. (Duffy, G.G., and Roehler, L.R. (1986) Improving Classroom Instruction: A Decision Making Approach. New York: Random House)

How to do it?

1. Teacher selects a passage to read aloud that contains points of difficulty, contradictions, ambiguities, unknown words, etc. As teacher reads the passage, students follow along silently, listening to teacher as she thinks through each trouble spot.

2. Teacher chooses specific instances when comprehension lags and models coping strategies for students.

3. Examples or points include:

   A. **Making predictions** (developing hypotheses) – "I think this is a description of a computer game."

   B. **Describing pictures** being formed mentally (developing images) – "I have in my mind a picture of a car on a dark, probably narrow, country road."

   C. **Making analogies** (linking prior knowledge to new information in the text) – "This is like a time we had a flat tire on the way to Boston."

   D. **Verbalizing confusing points** (monitoring ongoing comprehension) – "This just doesn't make sense."

   E. **Demonstrating fix-up strategies** (correcting lagging comprehension) – "Maybe I'll reread to see if I can better understand."

(Davey, B. (1983, Oct.) Think aloud - Modeling the Cognitive processes of reading comprehension. Journal of Reading. Vol. 27. pp. 44-47.)

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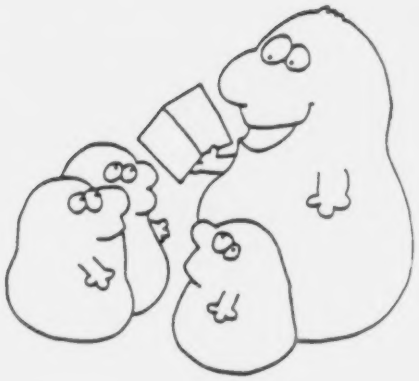
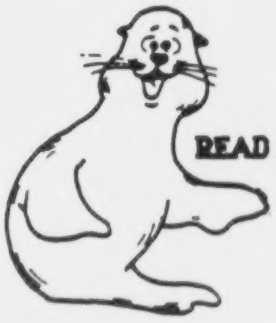


Reader Interacting with the Text



READ ALOUD/THINK ALOUD

D-R-T-A Fiction

What is it?

Directed Reading/Thinking Activity which engages students in comprehension monitoring through open-ended teacher questions which reflect the three steps of (1) declaring purpose, (2) reasoning while reading, and (3) judging.

Why use it?

The D-R-T-A provides a vehicle for readers to construct text meaning in their own minds, framing their questions in the form of predictions. (Richek, 1987)

How to do it:

Three steps to a D-R-T-A

I. Develop Purpose
   A. teacher
   B. group
   C. story
   D. illustrations

2. Develop Reasoning

Balance

Reader's Experience & Knowledge	Author's Experience & Knowledge

3. Develop habits of testing predictions.

(Stauffer 1967)

Use the questions to:

Set purpose/predict

Independently read

Appraise

Generate new predictions

"If you were writing about _____, what would you include?"

"What do you think a story with a title like this will be about?"

"What will the author tell you?"

"What was our first clue. . .?"

"What do you suppose the author was trying to. . .?"

"How do you think _____ felt when. . . ?"

D-R-T-A Expository

What is it?

Directed Reading/Thinking Activity for expository text is a procedure used to guide students to:

1) activate prior knowledge for the topic of the text to be read.
2) hypothesize about what might be addressed in the text.
3) establish purposes for reading.

The student continues through the passage confirming, revising and rejecting hypotheses.

Why use it?

Readers who have specific strategies for reading expository text and know the peculiarities of expository text are more efficient readers and make better use of the information.

How to do it:

Step 1. Recalling prior knowledge and setting purposes for reading. At the beginning of a chapter, unit, or article, ask and record responses to the following:

a. **What do you know about...**
b. **What do you think you know about...**
c. **What would you like to know about...**

Step 2. Reading to confirm prior knowledge and add to prior knowledge.

a. Read the article.
b. See if you can find the answers to your questions about...

Step 3. Confirming, rejecting, or adding to prior knowledge and invite further research.

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D.R.T.A.

What do you know about. . .

What do you think you know about. . .

What would you like to know about. . .

D.R.T.A.

1. Recall Prior Knowledge
   Set Purpose for Reading
2. Read to Confirm and Add
   Prior Knowledge
3. Confirm, Reject, Add to
   Prior Knowledge

RECIPROCAL TEACHING

What is it?

Reciprocal teaching is a dialogue between teacher and students using four strategies:

1) generating questions.

2) summarizing.

3) clarifying.

4) predicting.

Why use it?

Reciprocal teaching enables students to construct meaning and to self-monitor as they read.

How to do it?

1) Teacher gives an overview explaining what it is.

2) Teacher explains and guides practice on each strategy.

3) Teacher selects short segment of text for students to read silently.

4) Teacher models the four strategies using the text segment. Students participate in this discussion.

5) Students take turns being the "teacher" as the teacher guides or gives feedback.

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Generating questions:

1) directs reader to specific information.
2) forces reader to reprocess and manipulate text.

Summarizing:

1) helps reader focus on pertinent information.
2) focuses active involvement of reader.

Clarifying:

1) directs reader to look for confusing parts of the text.
2) helps reader decide which "fix up" strategy to use.

Predicting:

1) forces reader to read with anticipation.
2) causes reader to look for clues indicating where the author is headed.

Palinscar, A. & Brown, A. (1985). Reciprocal teaching: Activities to promote "Reading with your mind." In T. Harris and E. Copper (Eds.) Reading, Thinking and Concept Development. New York: College Entrance Examination Board.

K-W-L

What is it?

K-W-L is:
1) a thinking-reading strategy.
2) used with expository text.
3) a framework for constructing meaning.

It consists of three parts:
1) Identify what readers already KNOW about a topic.
2) Determine what readers WANT to find out about the topic.
3) Note what readers LEARNED from reading the selection.

Ogle, D. (1986, Feb.) K-W-L: A teaching model that develops active reading of expository text. The Reading Teacher, 39 (6), pp. 564-570.

Why use it?

Readers will:
1) become actively involved in setting purposes for their own reading
2) actively engage in restructuring ideas while reading
3) become more focused and comprehend better.

How to do it?

Teacher models and guides:
1) brainstorming what is already known about a selected topic.
2) students writing what they think they know on their worksheets.
3) students and teachers generating and recording questions they want to learn.
4) students reading text and not what they have learned.

Student independent use of strategy:
1) Identify: "What do you already KNOW?"
2) Determine: "What questions do you WANT to have answered?"
3) As you read: "Think about what you are LEARNING."

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K-W-L Strategy Sheet

What We Know	What We Want To Find Out	What We Learned Still Need to Learn
1.		

2. Categories of Information We Expect to Use

A.
B.
C.
D.
E.
F.
G.

K-W-L

K= What we KNOW

W= What we WANT to know

L= what we LEARNED

_____ (Topic)

K What I know	W What I want to know	L What I learned

KWL CHART

Semantic Mapping

What is it?

Semantic Maps are diagrams that help students see how words and concepts are related to one another.

Why use it?

Semantic mapping can help readers:

1. activate prior knowledge.
2. retrieve prior knowledge which relates to the topic about which they will be reading.
3. link the new information with the old.
4. retain and transfer knowledge.

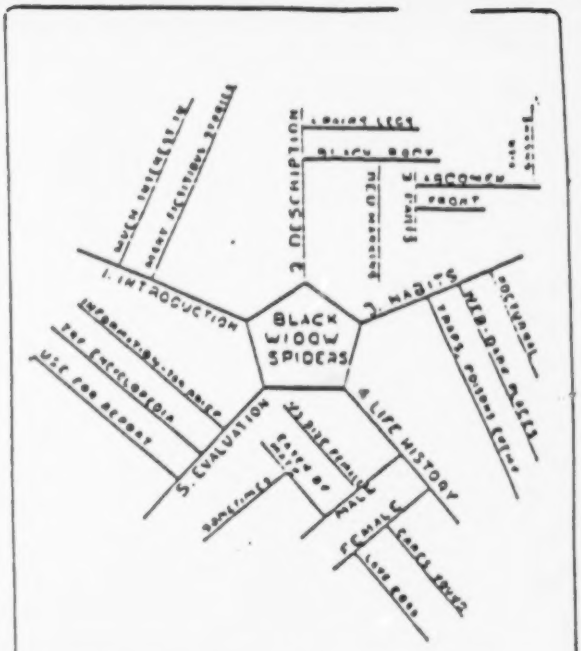
How to do it?

Teacher with student:

1. select a word important to the story or selection.
2. write it down.
3. think of related words and list them in categories.
4. name the categories.
5. discuss the words and their relationships.
6. read the story or selection.
7. return to the semantic map. Add new words and discuss the relationships.

What do students learn?

1. The meaning and uses of new words.
2. Old words in a new context.
3. The relationships among words.



From M. Buckley Hall, "Mapping: A Technique for Translating Reading and Thinking," *Journal of Reading*, January 1971, p. 223.

Students learn . . .

- the meaning and uses of new words
- old words in a new context
- the relationships among words

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Expository Text Mapping

What is it?

An Expository Map is a verbal picture of ideas as they are organized and symbolized by the reader. It is a holistic representation of the text simultaneously showing all of the related parts.

Why use it?

An organized approach for teaching expository reading is necessary:

1) to assist the student in linking new information to prior knowledge.
2) to familiarize the student with the structure of expository material.

How to do it:

1. Read text to get a holistic understanding of the selection.
2. Read text a second time in a more detailed manner. The title is placed in level I of map.
3. Begin with the first paragraph. As you read, translate only the important ideas into concepts or concept phrases.
4. Ask yourself how the concept phrase is related to the preceding information. If the information is more general, it should be placed below the previous information. In some cases the information will be at the same level. (Just because a concept appears next in a sequence, one does not necessarily place the concept next to the preceding concept. Always use the author's intended meaning as the criterion.
5. Identify the relational link that connects the concepts. Insert the link within a parentheses between two concepts.
6. Read until you have identified the next important concept. Repeat steps 4 and 5. All subtitles should be used.
7. Look at the completed expository map. If all relationships between and among concepts are not meaningful, they should be eliminated.

   Remember: There are only five levels to a concept map. Information which falls below the fifth level should not be included.
8. Difficult vocabulary words which relate to the central purpose should be listed.
9. Important (graphs, maps, pictures, etc.) should be listed with page numbers included and marked with an asterisk in the map.

(Wixom and Peters 1985)

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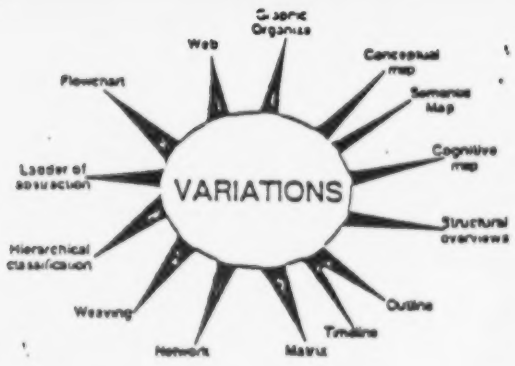
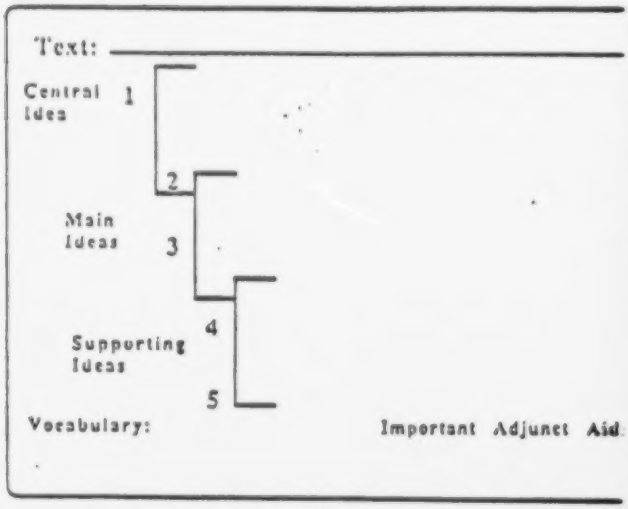
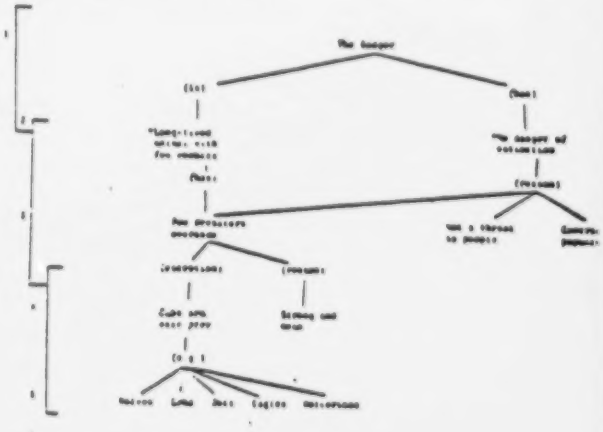
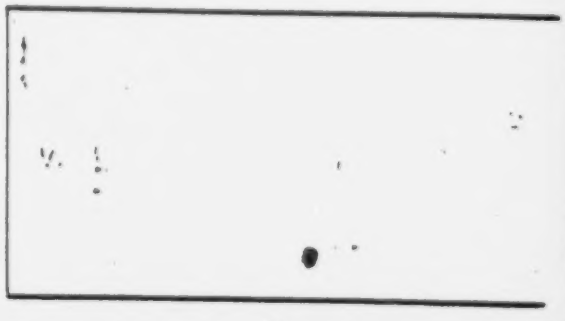




Rational Links for Expository Mapping

(Michigan Model)





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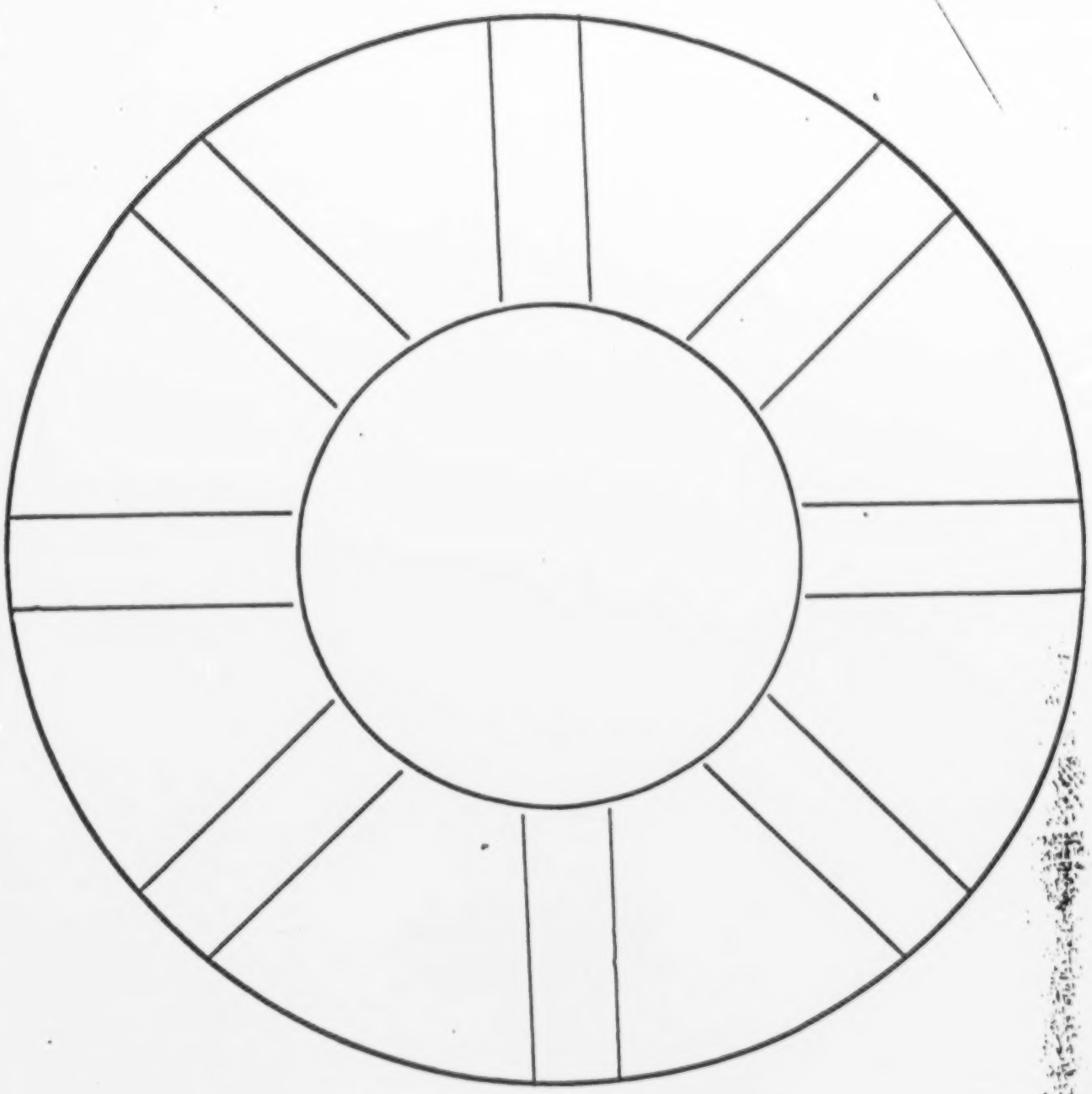
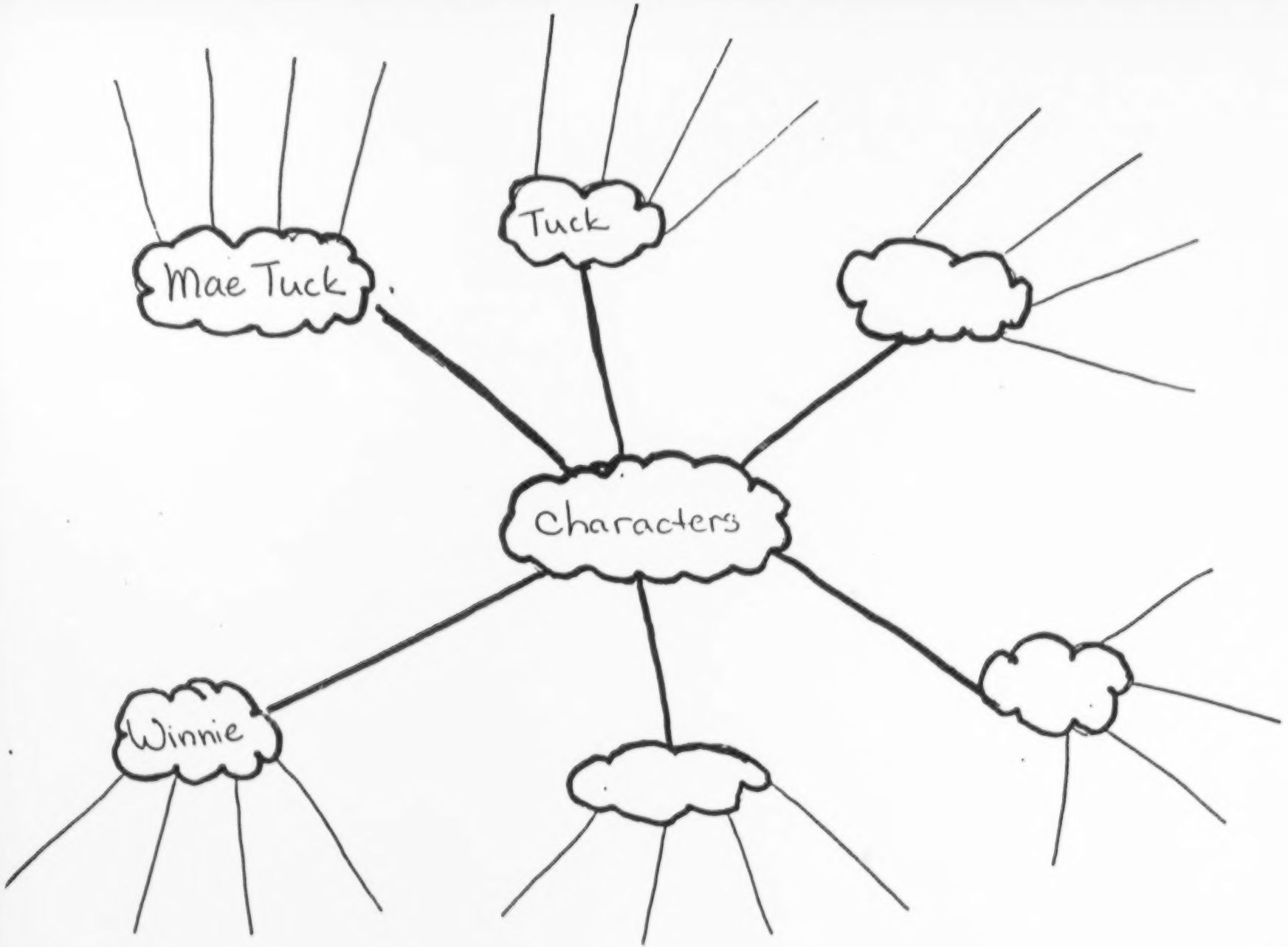
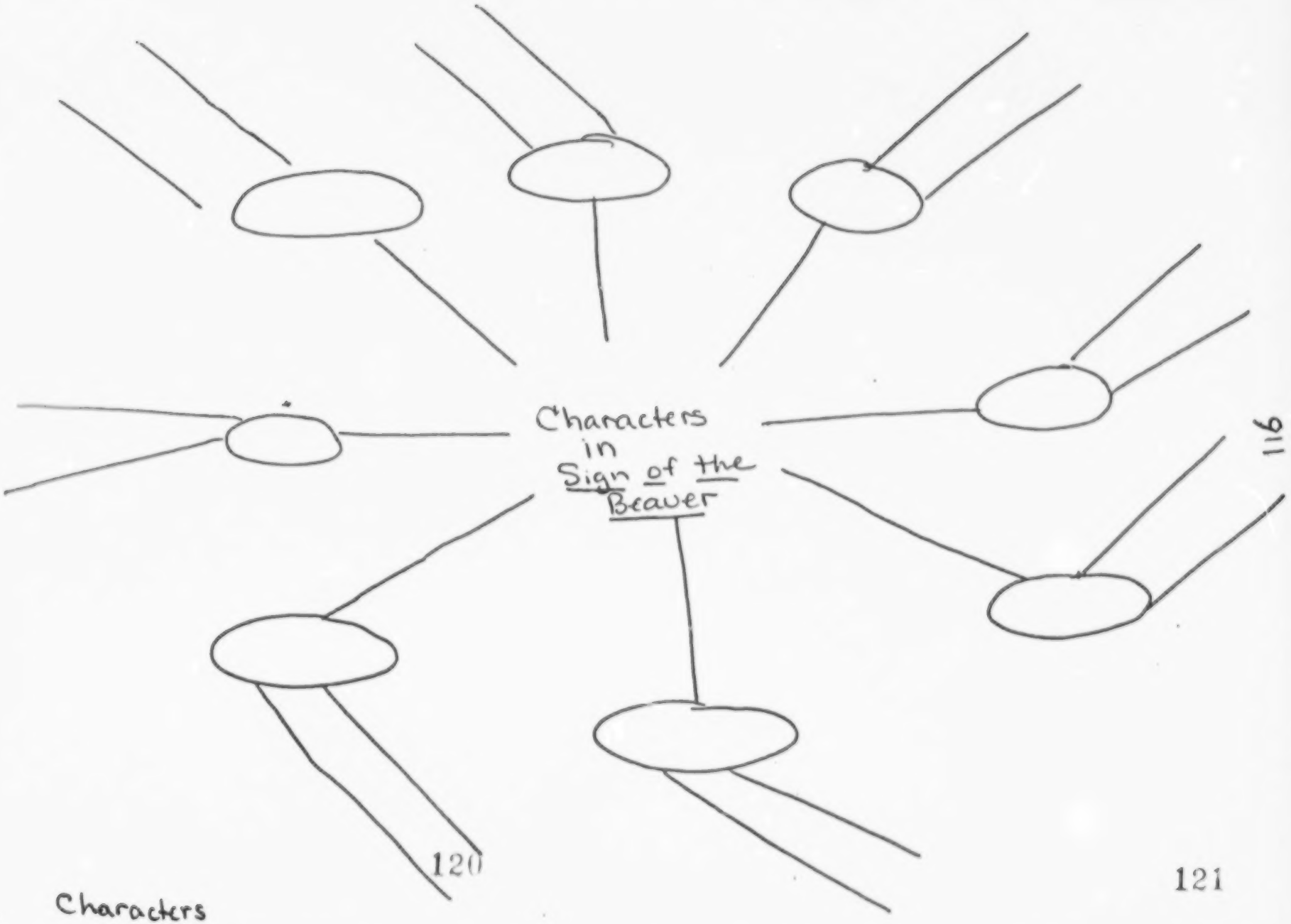


Used for:

Character Wheel
Incidents in a Story
Ideas


Mae Tuck
Tuck
Characters
Winnie



116

120

121

Characters
and characteristics

Story Map

What is it?

A story map is a graphic representation of the structure of a story. Story maps give students a structure for retelling stories.

A story map defines elements of a story:

Setting
Characters
Problems/Goals
Events
Resolutions
Theme

Why use it?

Students building story maps construct meaning, noting not only story elements but their relationships.

Story retellings enhance and extend students' comprehension.

Whaley, J.F. (1987, April) Story grammar and reading instruction. "The Reading Teacher," 40, pp 734-737.

How to do it?

1) Teacher constructs a story map outline; students fill in specific information.

OR

2) Students construct their own story maps.

ALL MAPS CONTAIN SOME OR ALL OF THESE ELEMENTS:

Setting
Characters
Problems/Goals
Events
Resolutions
Theme

Story maps can be general plot maps (see examples on back) or character or theme cluster maps.

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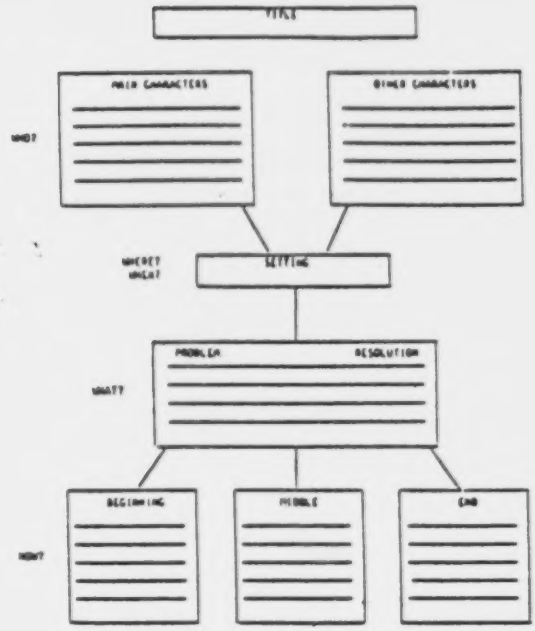
A PLOT MAP



STORY MAP

Setting:

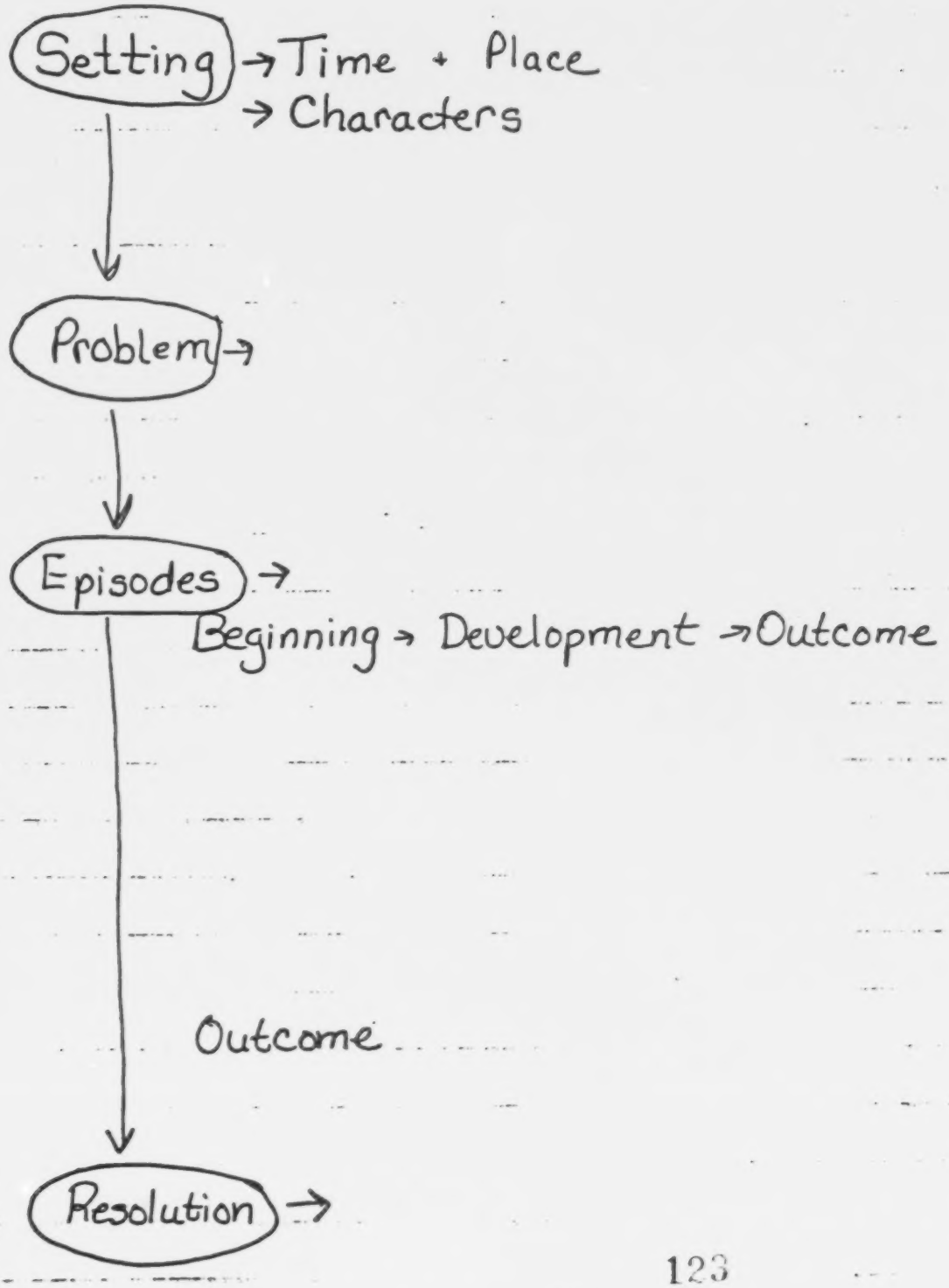
Characters:

Problem/Goal:

Events:

Resolution:

Story Map


Setting
→ Time + Place
→ Characters
Problem →
Episodes →
Beginning → Development → Outcome
Outcome
Resolution →

STORY MAP

Title: **Author:**

Setting **Characters:**
Place:
Time:

Problem:

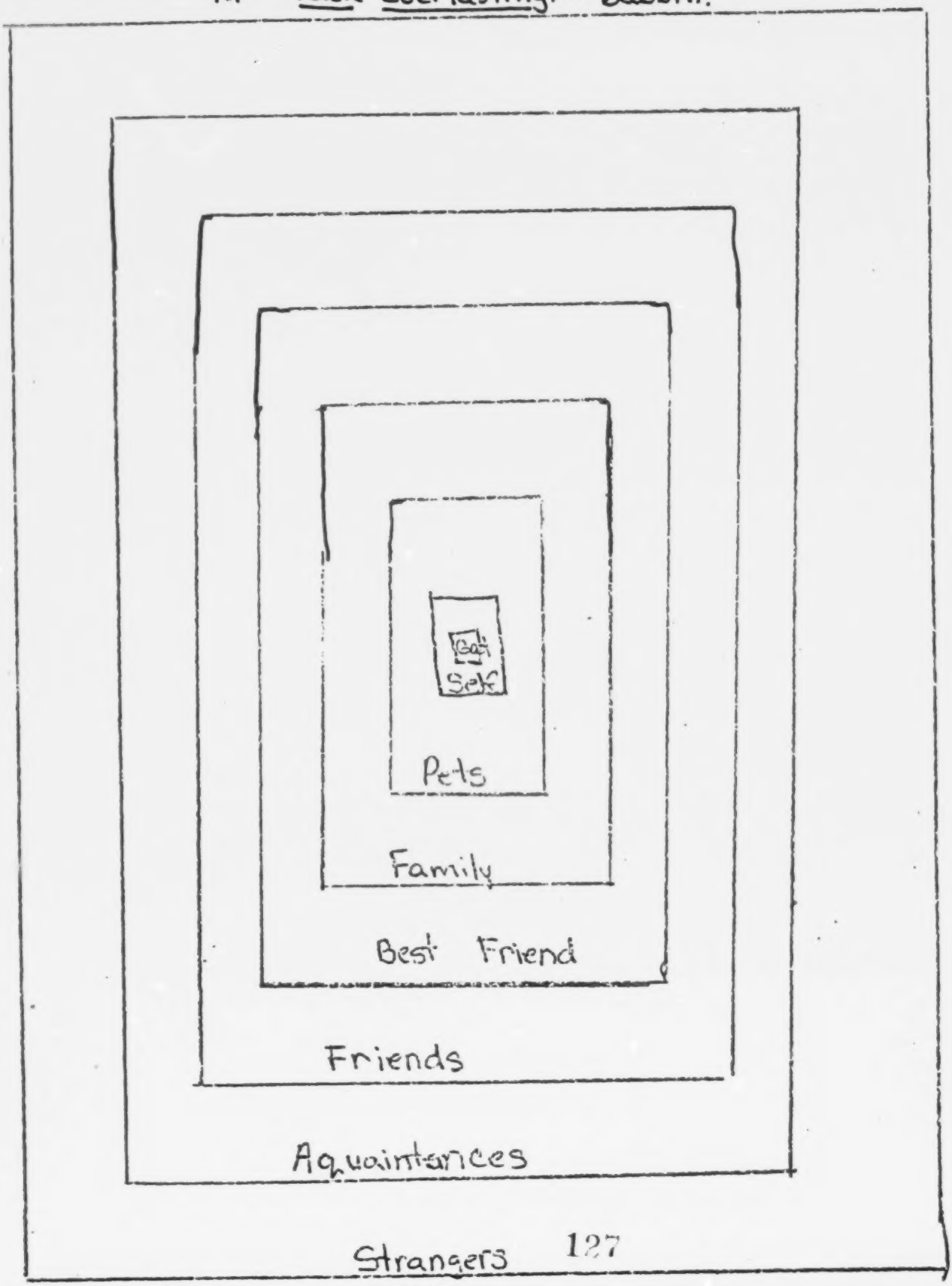
Events leading to Resolution

Resolution:

* Used for Book Summaries / Reviews
* Used to Reading + Writing _____ (title)

Setting	Characters	Problem	Problem-Solution	Ending

Used to discuss relationships.
in Tuck Everlasting. - Babbitt.



Story Grammar

What is it?

A story grammar describes the structure of a story including story elements (setting, characters, problem or goal, events, resolution, and theme) and their relationships to one another. Teachers use story grammars (maps) to help students develop and enhance their sense of story.

Why use it?

Children, to one degree or another, have a sense of story (set of expectations for what a story should be). Children with a less developed sense of story can benefit from instruction in story parts, their order and relationship.

(Fitzgerald, J. & Spiegel, D.L. "Enhancing children's reading comprehension through instruction in narrative structure". Journal of Reading Behavior 1983, 18 (2), 1-17.)

How to do it:

Teacher outlines story including the following story elements and their relationship to each other:

Setting is the time and place in which a story happens.

Characters are the personalities, people or animals in a story.

The events of a story are the characters' attempts to solve a problem or achieve a goal.

The resolution is the success or failure of the characters' attempts to solve the problem or achieve the goal.

Theme is the idea, point of view, or perception embodied and expanded upon in a story.

Vocabulary might consist of words from the story that are conceptually important to story comprehension.

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Story Map
for
Teacher Planning
(Michigan Model)

Themes

Main Idea: Literal main idea of the story
Abstract: Universal theme (author's purpose/reader's purpose)

Plot

Setting: Location and time of the story
Relation to theme: Relation of setting to theme

Major Characters:

Name(s)	Traits	Function
	Character traits in relation to plot and theme	Function of character in relation to plot and theme

Problem/Goal: Dilemma or conflict/main character's goal

Major Events:

1
2 Episodes leading to the resolution of the problem
3 and/or achievement of the goal
4

Resolution: Solving of the problem and/or achievement of the goal

Vocabulary

Concepts that are important to the story

STORY GRAMMAR

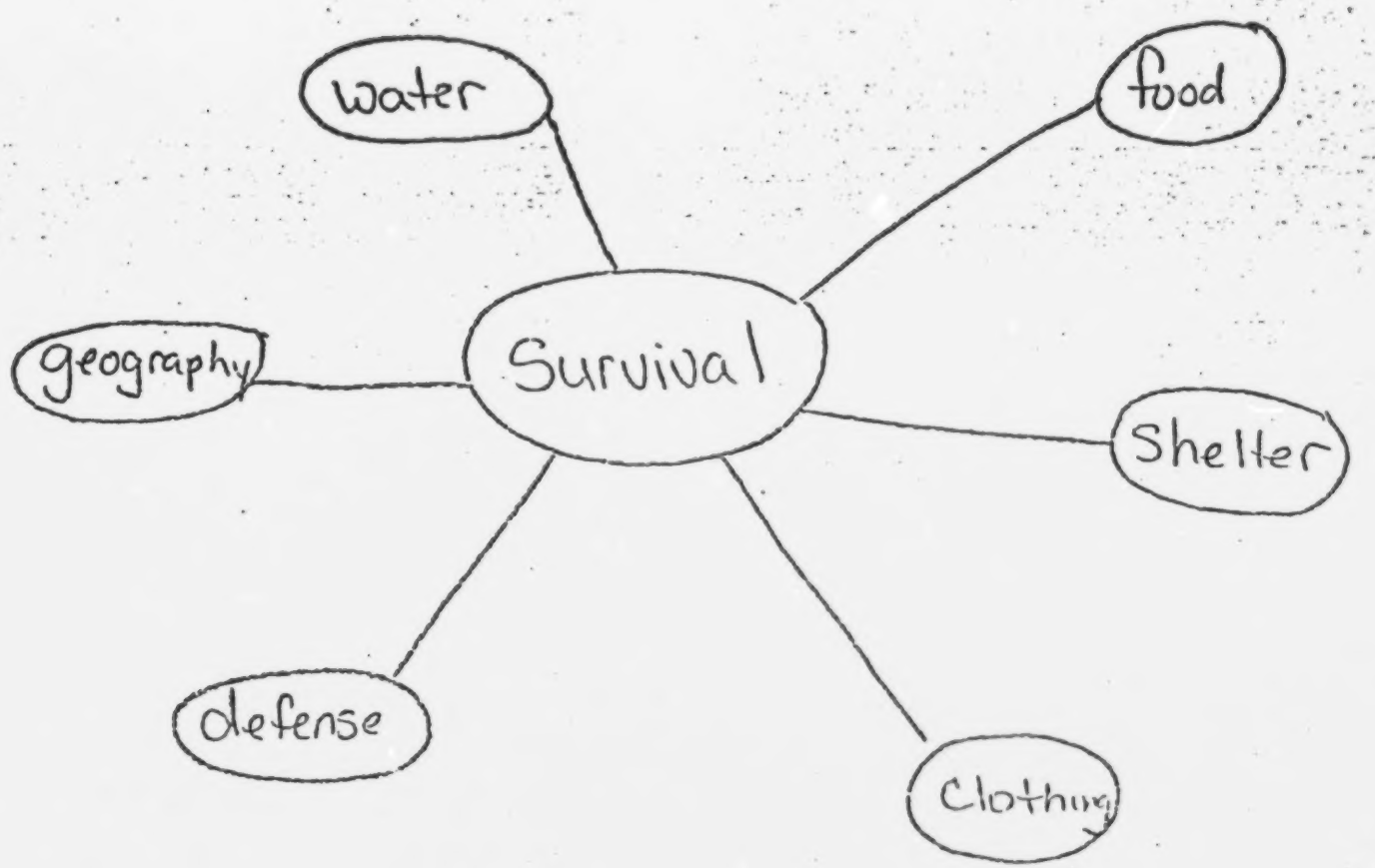
Setting:

Characters:

Problem/Goal:

Events:

Resolution:



Idea taken from - Norton's Through the Eyes of a Child

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Themes.
what the story is really about.
Lesson or moral

Patience } is rewarded
Good }

Evil is punished

Determination - If you don't succeed, try. try again

Friendship

Survival

Courage

Death

Struggle for freedom

Coming of age ie. growing up

Responsibility

Beauty is only skin deep

Problems of growing old

Generation gap

Conflicts

Person vs. nature

Person vs. person

People vs themselves

Good vs evil

Poor "good" girl marries Prince

TITLE OF THE BOOK _____ NAME _____

AUTHOR _____

HARACTER NTERPRETATION	Very	Somewhat	Neither/Both	Somewhat	Very	
Good						Evil
Kind						Unkind
Honest						Dishonest
Gentle						Violent
Brave						Cowardly
Set						

Johnson Terry and Dorothy [illegible]

REPORT CARD

STUDENT _____

SCHOOL _____

TEACHER _____

A = Outstanding B = Good C = Satisfactory
D = Improvement Needed E = Failure

SUBJECT	GRADE	COMMENTS

Signal Words for Organizational Patterns or Te

ENUMERATION
and Directional

to begin with
first
second
next
then
finally
the following:
most important
also
in fact
for instance
for example

TIME ORDER

On (date)
not long after
now
as
before
after
when
finally
last
meanwhile

Signal Words for Organizational Patterns of Te

COMPARE / CONTRAST

however
but
as well as
on the otherhand
not only .... but also
either .... or
neither .... nor
while
although
unless
similarly
yet
like

CAUSE / EFFECT
PROBLEM / SOLUTION

because
since
therefore
consequently
as a result
this led to
so that
nevertheless
accordingly
if .... then
thus

Guidelines for Asking Questions

Here are some guidelines for questions that help develop comprehension:

1. Tend to ask questions about what is going to be read. This enhances higher level thinking.
   Example: What is this story going to be about?
   What's going to happen next?
   How is he going to solve his problem?

2. Ask important questions.
   Text: The Packers had just lost their sixth football game in a row. Louis Williams, the quarterback . . .
   Question: What was the name of the team?
   Bad question — the name is insignificant.
   Question: What was the Packer's problem?
   Better question — it is significant and we've identified the initial story problem.

3. Ask questions that follow naturally from an initial question.
   Question: What's going to happen?
   Answer: He's going to run out of dishes.
   Question: How do you know, or what makes you think that will happen?
   Answer: Because he never washes them.

4. Avoid diversionary questions.
   In the middle of a story don't ask, "What would you do in this situation?" or "Have you ever had this problem?".

5. Ask predictive questions that explore more than one possibility.
   After an initial prediction, encourage divergent thinking by asking, "What's another possibility?", "Who has a different idea?", "What else might happen?", etc.

6. Remember, just because a question begins with the word **why**, that doesn't necessarily make it a thoughtful question.

Continued . . .

7. a. Save some of the good thought provoking questions until after the reading is completed.
   b. Tend to ask questions during the story that have **thrust**, i.e., they make the reader want to read more.

Then, after the story we can **reflect** and analyze whether the character made the right decision, how the mood of the story changed, why what happened, happened, and perhaps what you might do under similar circumstances, etc.

It is in the Reflection Stage (after the reading) that so many subskills can be taught.

Example: Why didn't he take his teddy bear?
Answer: Because he was afraid Reggie would laugh.

Example: What's this story really about? (Main idea/theme)

Example: What were you thinking when you were on page ?
Answer: I thought he would . . . because . . . (provide supporting details)

Example: What did he do then? (sequence)

8. Ask questions that access prior knowledge and encourage students to use what they've already read.
   Example: What do we already know about . . . ?
   Based on what we've read so far, what might happen?
   What makes you think so?
   Etc.

9. Ask questions that center around story problems.
   Example: What's the problem here?
   What's happening in this story?

10. Ask good metacognitive questions before, during, and after the reading.
    Example: How can we find out?
    (before) What are we going to be reading to find out? (purpose)
    (during) What do we know so far?
    What questions are still unanswered?
    (after) What were you thinking when you got to this point in the story?
    What caused you to change your mind later on?
    What did the writer do to make you think that?
    When did you first become aware that this story takes place in the future?
    When were you positive?
    What evidence did the writer give us?
    Etc.

Questions
Questions

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